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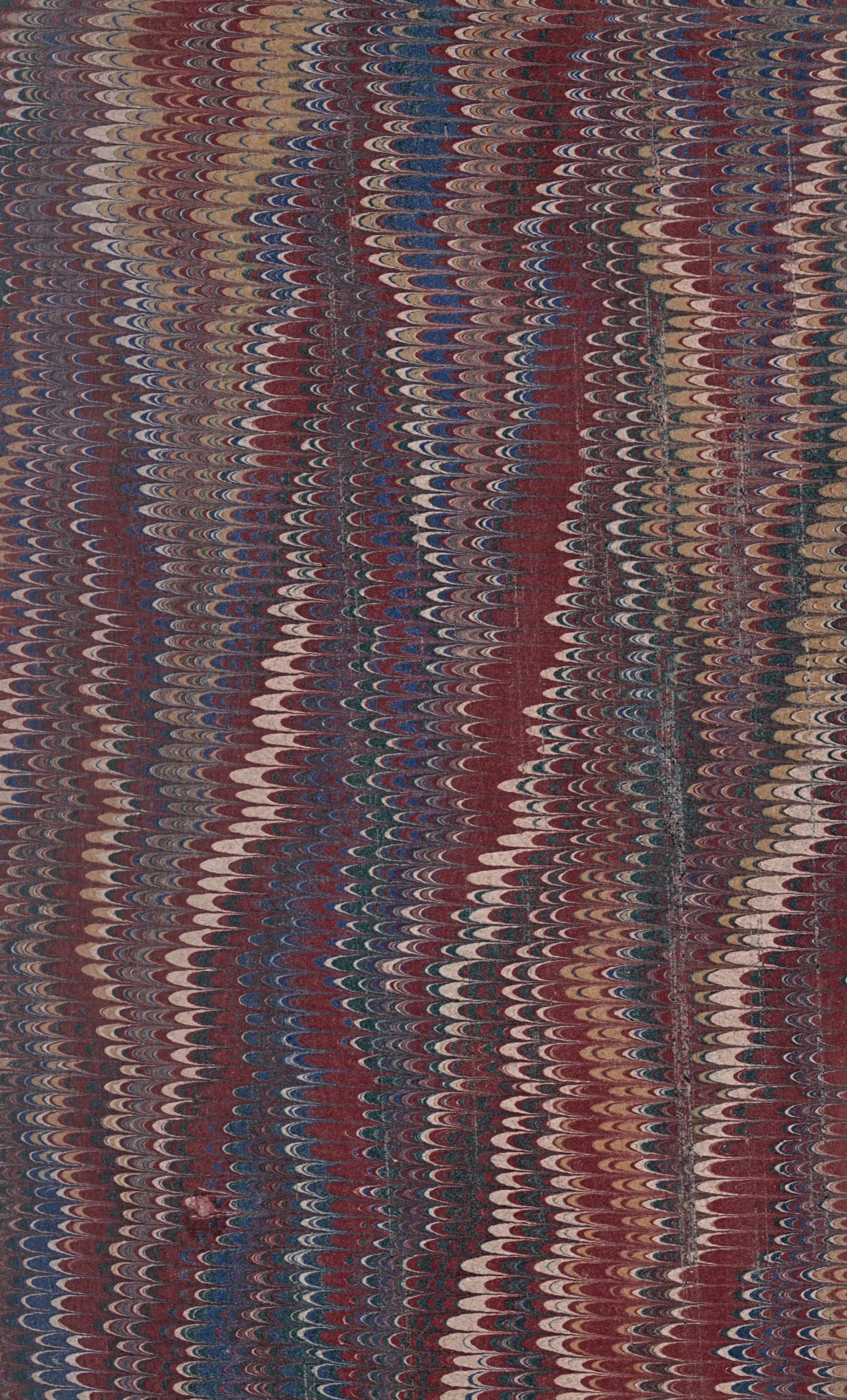
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THE CASE OF  
**REUBEN MALACHI**

By H. SUTHERLAND EDWARDS.

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NEW YORK.

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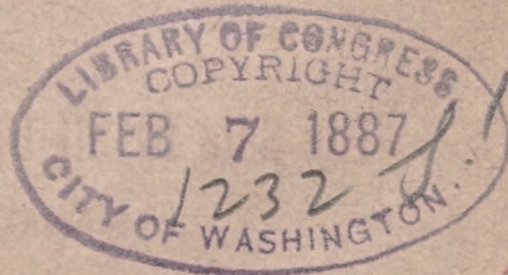


THE

# Case of Reuben Malachi.

BY

H. SUTHERLAND EDWARDS.



NEW YORK:

GEORGE MUNRO, PUBLISHER,

17 TO 27 VANDEWATER STREET.

1887



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# THE CASE OF REUBEN MALACHI.

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## CHAPTER I.

WITH only a few principles—to which, however, I hold tenaciously—I have scarcely any prejudices; and I try to judge men and women not by their birth, their social position, or their reputation, but in a direct manner by their absolute qualities. I confess, however, that I was a little staggered when the parentage was first made known to me of a very beautiful and singularly refined girl with whom I was already hopelessly in love.

I became acquainted with her at Milan, where she was staying with her brother, a lieutenant in one of our regiments of dragoon guards, and with a sort of chaperon or elderly companion. They had a suite of rooms on the first floor of the Hotel de la Ville, and it was only from meeting the brother, Tom Huntly, in the smoking-room and at the opera—where I occupied one night the stall next to his—that I came to know them. A day or two afterward, when I was inquiring at the box office of La Scala for a stall, and could not on any terms secure one, Mr. Huntly, who had just taken a box, offered me a seat in it; and I accepted it with pleasure, partly because I was very anxious to hear Verdi's "Aïda," at that time a novelty, but



principally because I should now have an opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with Mr. Huntly's sister, whom I had hitherto admired only at a distance.

I did not mind showing a little eagerness; and some minutes before the time fixed for the beginning of the performance I made my way to the box, whose number Mr. Huntly had given me. It was one of the best on the grand tier; and, pending the arrival of the Huntlys, I sat down, and soon became so absorbed in the beautiful music that I forgot everything else.

Scarcely, however, had Masini, the tenor, begun his romance—"Celest Aïda"—when in came Tom Huntly, his sister (whose name, I found, was Florence), and Miss Whitcombe, the companion. Having been introduced to the ladies I fell to the rear, ceding the place I had occupied to Miss Huntly, and taking my seat immediately behind her. Miss Whitcombe sat in front, side by side with her interesting charge, whom I now saw for the first time in evening dress. It became her, I thought, even more than her well-chosen, well-made walking costumes, of which she possessed a great variety.

If I were to attempt a description of her toilet I should fall into some of those mistakes which men always commit when, with reckless daring, they seek to penetrate the mysteries of feminine attire. I remember, however, that her dress was of pure white, and that it had a very ethereal look. But whether it was made of muslin, or crape, or gauze, I have not the least idea. Artists, I believe, find it difficult to paint white upon white; and it is not every white skin that in a white dress is seen to advantage. But



the marble-like bust of the young girl who sat before me could not have been overshadowed by juxtaposition with any of the objects or materials which serve in the hands of writers to suggest whiteness of an intense kind. I knew before that her eyes were bright, and her hair brown; but I now saw for the first time how beautifully her head was placed on her shoulders, and I was struck more than ever by the purity of her complexion. Who, I asked myself, could these Huntlys be? The brother was in a cavalry regiment; the sister was a model of aristocratic beauty. I had met in my travels with a Huntly who did not speak one word of English, but who calmly called himself "the Marquis of Huntly-Gordon;" and did so on the ground that he was the lineal descendant of the nobleman of that name whose title and estates were confiscated after the insurrection of 1745. But the Huntlys of Milan (so to describe them) were not in any way related to these Huntly-Gordons; and I noticed that they both looked a little confused when I asked Mr. Huntly whether such was perchance the case.

"The Huntlys, or Huntly-Gordons, have property somewhere in Poland," I observed.

"I don't think we are in any way connected with them," replied Miss Huntly.

"Our only foreign connection is with Lombardy," said Tom Huntly; a statement at which his sister looked confused and almost irritated, while Miss Whitcombe became, I thought, graver than she had previously been.

"The father," I said to myself, "must have made his money in some financial speculations; or perhaps he is a



banker. That is surely good enough for any one, though Miss Huntly does not seem to think so."

I found, from some words interchanged with Miss Whitcombe, that that lady had been Miss Huntly's governess; in which capacity she had traveled with her in various countries, stopping from time to time in some one of them that her pupil might have the advantage of studying the language among the natives, and with a native professor. At Milan Miss Huntly was chiefly occupied with musical work; and in the course of the evening her professor of singing, old Lamperti, of the Milan Conservatorio, came into the box, and remained for some time talking to her.

Mr. Huntly was away from his regiment on four months' leave. But the term had nearly expired, and in a few days he and his sister were to return by way of Switzerland and France to England.

The morning after my visit to the Huntlys' box I called upon them at the hotel, and was invited to dinner for the same evening. I of course accepted; determined that my acquaintance with them should not, if I could help it, prove one of those traveling acquaintances which are strictly local. The impression made upon me at first sight by Miss Huntly's grace and beauty lost nothing by repetition; and there was something so winning in her manner, slightly diffident as it nevertheless was, that before I had seen her many times I felt sincerely attached to her, and ready to sacrifice myself in every possible way, if by so doing I could promote her happiness.

The day before they were all to start for Switzerland Miss Huntly asked me, half in fun I thought at the time,



why I did not accompany them. I replied, entirely in earnest, that nothing would give me greater pleasure; and two days later we were all established together in a suite of rooms at the Hôtel de la Métropole, with the lake of Geneva at our feet. I had been adopted as one of the family; and it was only after a long argument and serious representations that, when the time came for paying the hotel-keeper, I succeeded in making Mr. Huntly accept my share of the bill. I had come by invitation, he argued; which in a certain sense was true. Meanwhile, Miss Huntly had treated me in the most friendly way. I could not say that she had, in popular parlance, "encouraged my attentions." Nor, indeed, so far as I knew, had I been attentive to her in any special manner. I had talked to her a good deal, and on many different subjects. But I could not be sure that she took as much interest in my conversation as I certainly did in hers. We made several excursions on the lake, visited the places associated with the memory of Voltaire, Rousseau, and Gibbon; went for a couple of days to Aix-les-Bains, and had still many places to see and many things to do, when it suddenly occurred to Huntly that if he did not start for England at once, and travel day and night, he would not get home before the expiration of his leave. It was decided then that the next morning he should take the train for Paris, leaving his sister and Miss Whitcombe to follow by easy stages.

"I don't know what you propose to do, Woodhouse," said Tom, "but I hope, in any case, that we shall see you, and see you very often, when you get to England. I, as you know, am at Aldershot. But I often run up to town,



and you can come and see me at the camp, if such things interest you. I dare say Florence has given you our London address; and when you happen to be in the Park, you won't find Norfolk Street, Park Lane, very far."

I thanked Huntly for his kindness, and assured him that I should take advantage of both his invitations. I at the same time gave him my address in the Inner Temple. I had already told both brother and sister that I was at the Bar, and to prevent all possibility of mistakes had explained that I was a barrister without briefs. I had also endeavored to let it be understood that I had nothing to boast of in the way of private means. But people have such different ideas as to the meaning of the words "well off," "badly off," and so on; and in spite of my protest to the contrary the brother and sister—aided and abetted, no doubt, by Miss Whitcombe—seemed determined to regard me as a sort of modest millionaire.

I found Huntly a very good fellow. But I was glad all the same when he took the train for Dijon on his way to Paris. Hitherto I had been obliged to divide my conversation between him and his sister, with a word or two now and then to Miss Whitcombe. I should now have Florence, more or less, to myself.

Huntly and his charming sister were so open and straightforward, so entirely without afterthought or guile of any kind, that I could not suppose I had been left in Florence's society with a view to anything. The only view possible—if views were entertained—was a matrimonial one; and as the Huntlys were evidently rich, and evidently accustomed to good society, I could not see what they had



to gain by allying themselves to a poor but costly person like myself. I had about two hundred and fifty pounds a year of my own, and I used to spend some three or four pounds a week in London for nine or ten months, that I might travel at my ease during the remainder of the year. The Huntlys might fancy from my mode of living now that I was on my travels, that I possessed a tolerable income; and the very day after her brother's departure Miss Huntly showed that this was her conviction by the way she questioned me as to my pursuits at this and that season of the year.

"Do you pass your winters at Nice, or Mentone, or where?" she asked.

"I pass them at Pump Court, Inner Temple," I replied.

"Oh, I see. You retire there when you have done your shooting in Scotland, or wherever it is you shoot."

"I don't shoot anywhere."

"Oh, you don't care for shooting? Do you hunt much?"

"Not at all. I should hunt solicitors if the etiquette of the bar allowed it, but it is forbidden."

"I can't understand you. I scarcely know when you are serious and when you are joking."

"That is a very poor compliment to my jokes. But, as I once before had the honor of saying to you, I am simply a barrister without briefs and with a taste for traveling. Travelers are described somewhere in one of Shakespeare's plays as persons who spend their own land to see the land of others. But I never had any land to spend—nor much to make away with in any other form."



“You need not be so impressive on the point. It matters very little to a young man beginning life whether he has money or not. On the whole, indeed, it is better that he should be without it.”

“I prefer, as a question of power and dignity, the state of a rich man who, if it pleases him, can live like a poor one, to that of a poor man whose inferiority to the rich one makes itself felt in so many ways. In the long run, moreover, the poor and the rich can not see much of one another; and there are plenty of rich people who are well worth knowing.”

“Tom has lots of money, and so have I,” said Florence. “But I am sure I don’t care about it; and I should hate it if it had the effect of separating me from friends less fortunately situated.”

“The motives of a poor man are sometimes open to suspicion, when no doubt could be entertained as to those of a rich one.”

“Who would doubt them merely by reason of his poverty? No one whose good opinion was worth having.”

“Suppose,” I said, “a poor man loved sincerely, and for her sake alone, a rich woman, would he not feel some delicacy about declaring his affection?”

“He ought not. If he did it would be only from a feeling of petty pride, from an unwillingness to be indebted to his wife for any portion of his success in life. I can think of no better use for a woman’s money than to expend it in aid of her husband. I mean when the husband is really a man worth helping.”

“But for a feeling of what you call petty pride, I should



like very much to open my heart to you on this subject. But you know already with what regard, what affection, you have inspired me. If our positions were in one respect reversed—if I were rich and you were poor—I should hasten to say to you what now I can not but hesitate to express.”

“If you mean,” said Florence, withdrawing her hand from mine, “that you would ask me to be your wife, I must tell you at once that it is impossible.”

“Impossible!” I exclaimed, with amazement, and also with a touch of indignation. “You are not engaged?”

“I should have been behaving very badly to you if I were. But I am free.”

“Then you do not care for me?”

“If I did not, should I have taken so much pleasure in your society?”

“This is cruel. You are simply tormenting me!”

“I am behaving very badly, I know. I ought to have told you before. But I hated the idea of not seeing you again.”

“What mystery is this?” I asked. “If you have the least regard for me when I love you so sincerely, so devotedly, how can there be any question of my never seeing you again?”

“If you had only known who I was, if you had only known who—or rather what—my father was, you might still, perhaps, have taken some interest in me, but you would have shrunk from making me an offer.”

“You and your brother are your father’s children. What can he have done to make you ashamed of him as you seem to be? Was he a financier, a commission agent,



an outside speculator in stocks and shares? What does that matter? Such occupations are lawful; and men who go in seriously for money-making can not afford to be particular."

"Worse, much worse than that!" said Florence, putting her handkerchief to her eyes.

"Was he an advertising agent, or the proprietor of a religious newspaper? He was in any case your father; and whatever his faults may have been I should respect him for your sake."

"Papa had no faults. But he was in trade."

"In England we have cabinet ministers and sons of dukes in trade."

"But such a trade!"

"He may have been an old clothesman, a dealer in marine stores, a broker attending auctions, I love you all the same."

"It was worse than that," she murmured through her tears.

"The devil!" I said to myself. "This is getting serious. Worse than a broker?" I asked.

"He was a sort of broker," she sobbed rather than said.

"A sort of broker? You don't mean a pawnbroker?"

She remained speechless; and I understood that the father of the young woman whom I desired above all things to make my wife had made his money beneath the sign of the three balls.

The first effect of this terrible discovery was, as I before said, to stagger me. But I resolved, out of consideration for Florence, not to show how severely I was hit.



When in one of Mr. Byron's amusing comedies an impoverished gentleman of fashion is recommended for the sake of economy to take a house in Camden Town, his adviser adds, by way of consolation, that he can "put Regent's Park on his cards." In like manner my much-loved Florence might, I thought, describe herself as the daughter of a silversmith or goldsmith, for assuredly her money-lending father must have dealt, among other things, in gold and silver. I pointed this out to her, and told her, moreover, that in the Middle Ages goldsmiths were looked upon as artificers of such a distinguished kind that they were accounted noble, and had letters of nobility specially granted to them.

What, I added, was Benvenuto Cellini, that illustrious worker in the precious metals, but a goldsmith even as her father had been?

"Did Benvenuto Cellini lend money on silver spoons?" asked Florence.

"Not exactly. But he carved and ornamented silver work of all kinds, and afterward took money for what he had done. Seriously, however, was that all you had to tell me, and was there no other objection?"

"None!" she whispered, placing her hand once more in mine.

Without waiting for any further reply I kissed her tenderly, and as Miss Whitcombe happened just at this moment to come into the room I hastened, by way of explanation, to tell her that I had the happiness of being engaged to Miss Huntly.



## CHAPTER II.

THE late Mr. Huntly must, when I came to think of it, have been a pawnbroker of rather a distinguished kind, or he scarcely would have been allowed to purchase for his son a commission in the army.

As soon as I got back to England, whither I traveled in company with Florence and Miss Whitcombe, I wrote to Tom Huntly asking him whether I should go and see him at Aldershot, or whether he would come to me in London. I had previously informed him of my engagement to his sister, and had of course expressed a hope that the marriage would be in all respects agreeable to him. He replied by telegram that he would be in London that very day, and the same afternoon he called upon me in the Temple. He was very anxious that there should be no mistake as to the position of his family.

“You know, of course,” he said—“Florence is sure to have told you—that there is a blot on our escutcheon; or rather it is blotted all over. Indeed, there is no escutcheon.”

“I know,” I replied, “that your father was in trade.”

“Yes; and such a trade! But you would never have thought so by his appearance or his conversation. He had a lucrative business, and did not like giving it up, though my poor mother was constantly begging him to do so. It would have been better for us, perhaps, in one sense, if he had, though very much worse in another.”



I said to myself that, in spite of the homage rendered by Huntly to his father, it was doubtless the mother whose qualities he, and above all his sister Florence, had inherited. She was an Italian, I afterward learned, of good family and perfect breeding; and her relations had shown great indignation when they discovered that the man she had married was not, as they had imagined, a merchant dealing in the precious metals, but a shop-keeper who, while selling articles of gold and silver, made most of his money by advancing small sums to wretched people on any articles of marketable value that they were able to deposit with him.

The supposed bullion merchant and goldsmith had explained to his wife that by giving up the pawnbroking business he would diminish his income by more than one half. This seemed to her a matter of no great importance, and she would have forgiven more willingly the deception practiced upon her parents and herself if her husband had, even at the last moment, consented to abandon a method of money-making which she looked upon as disreputable, if not absolutely immoral. Mr. Huntly maintained that it was no more immoral than any other kind of business, nor indeed so profitable as many to which no evil reputation is attached. He was prepared, however, out of regard for his wife's scruples, to relinquish it, when suddenly she died, leaving him with three young children to take care of. He now saw no valid reason why he should give up his house in the country, why he should put down his horses and carriages, why, above all, he should deprive himself of the means of giving a first-rate education to his



children, and leaving them at his death amply provided for.

He accordingly kept on the business, and continued to make money by it until, about a year before I made the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Huntly at Milan, he died.

I came to the conclusion that Mr. Huntly must have lent considerable sums to some high official at the Horse Guards or the War Office, or connected in some way with the commander-in-chief, though on this point his son, as a matter of course, gave me no information—probably, indeed, possessed none himself. I felt certain, too, that the applicant for the commission had not described himself as a pawnbroker, and that he must have been represented to the authorities as a goldsmith and jeweler of the highest standing.

Mr. Huntly had done his best to purify his sons from the malodorous reputation attaching to them in virtue of his business, by sending them to good schools. After endeavoring in vain to place them at more than one private establishment from which they were turned back on the ground that “only the sons of gentlemen were received,” he resolved to try public ones, where no objection was made.

Thomas, the one who was now in the army, he sent to Eton, where, as soon as the boy's origin was discovered, he became generally known as “Broker.” Tom had the good sense to accept the designation as if he saw nothing opprobrious in it, though on one occasion, when its offensive character was accentuated in too provoking a manner, he showed fight, and to such effect that the boy who had



taunted him abstained carefully from doing so again. He was still called "Broker," but he pretended not to care, and after a time, when he had got used to it, and when it was quite understood that though he did not mind a joke he would not stand a deliberate insult, he accepted the nickname as though it were no worse than any other.

The other son, William by name, went to Harrow, where he was called first "Up the Spout," and afterward when this expression seemed too circuitous, "My Uncle," and finally "Uncle." Numbers of boys called him "Uncle" without attaching any particular meaning to the word; and as he, like his brother Thomas, was a good-natured and manly young fellow, the inutility of teasing one who was not to be teased was after a time fully recognized.

On leaving Harrow, William Huntly, the elder of the two brothers, went to Oxford, and three years afterward entered the Church, just about the time when Thomas left Eton to join the regiment to which he had been appointed. All this was told me by Tom Huntly, when, after calling upon me at my chambers, he dined with me at the Travelers.

I also learned from him that he and his brother had each inherited twenty thousand pounds from their father.

"You do not ask," he added after a pause, "what money Florence has."

"I hope I need not tell you that I don't particularly care."

"Of course you don't. But I must let you know, all the same. I am afraid you will find it very awkward."

"Is the money tied up? So much the better."



“Well, I must tell you. I don’t think you’ll like it. But my father left her the business.”

I remained silent, not by any means pleased at the idea of my darling Florence being a pawnbroker.

“Why not sell it?” I asked. “Why not make it over to a Limited Liability Company or something of that kind?”

“I, personally, have of course no wish to keep it in the family; nor has my brother. But it brings in some four or five thousand a year, and I don’t suppose it would fetch more than ten or twelve thousand pounds; and for that reason, though Florence has always been most anxious to get rid of it, we felt it unfair to encourage her to do so. It is a low business, no doubt. But to say that there is anything wicked in it is absurd. On the Continent the large money-lending establishments kept by the State are looked upon as charitable institutions; and a man of such high birth as Saint Simon, the founder of the sect of Saint Simonians, and a lineal descendant of the duke who wrote the memoirs, was not ashamed to become a clerk in the Mont de Piété of Paris.”

“Pawnbrokers, all the same,” I objected, “take high interest from starving customers.”

“The baker who sells them bread, the butcher who sells them meat, do precisely the same thing: only that, as a rule, their profits are larger. But it is no use discussing the abstract question. I understand your dislike to the business, and fully share it. As I before said, I look upon it as low, but it is not immoral. If it were, it would be wrong to sell it; the only thing to do would be to bring



it to an end. There are many reasons for not turning it over to a Limited Liability Company. Otherwise there is scarcely any trade—none that I know of—in which men will not place their money in view of large profits. Announce the Mount of Piety for advancing money at twenty per cent. interest on portable security realizable at the expiration of one year, and the shares would be taken up in no time. But it would perhaps be necessary to go into particulars; to identify Brunton, the name under which the business has been carried on since my father's death, with the long-established firm of Huntly; and that we should not care for. However, when you are married it will be for you to decide. The concern will then be yours."

"I shall, in spite of myself, be a pawnbroker," I reflected; and the notion certainly did not fill me with delight.

"Well," I said, "inasmuch as you, your brother, Florence, and myself are all of one mind, there can be no difficulty about the matter. If the business were sold for only ten thousand pounds, which is what you say it would fetch, Florence and myself would, with my own money, have plenty to live upon."

"Without counting at least as much that during the last few years Florence must have saved."

"Oh, indeed! I, as I have told you, have only about £250 a year; the interest, that is to say, on £8000. But I suppose I shall some day get a little practice. Meanwhile, how is the business we were talking of carried on?"

"The old foreman manages it."

"I suppose I shall have to see him."

"It would be better, if you don't mind."



“Mind? Not in the least. I will call upon him as soon as possible after our marriage; before, if you like.”

“The sooner the better, I should think,” said Huntly.

“His name is Brunton, and you will find him at 126 Coventry Street, a corner house.”

“All right,” I replied. “I will speak to Florence about it to-morrow morning, and see him, if possible, the same afternoon.”

Florence, when the next morning I called upon her, begged me to sell the business straight off for anything it would fetch, and she was particularly anxious that I should get rid of it before our marriage, so that in becoming my wife she might not endow me with a possession of which she was ashamed. I thought the best thing to do would be to advertise for a purchaser. But before taking that step I went to Coventry Street to talk the matter over with Mr. Brunton. Above the shop were the traditional three balls; and I could not help smiling when I saw how small they were. Arranged symmetrically in a straight line they suggested, not the sign of the ignoble money-lender, but the coronet of the peer.

As I entered the shop the cheerful but penniless Raffles —“Augustus Raffles of the Parliamentary Bar,” as he loved to call himself—saw me go in; and to indicate what he believed to be the object of my visit, went through the pantomime of drawing a watch from his pocket. I retraced my steps in order to explain to him that he was under a mistake. I added that I only wanted to make some inquiries.

“To ask how much he would lend you on it?” said the incredulous Raffles.



“No, really!” I protested. “I wanted to buy something.” But as I could not think at the moment of what it was I proposed to purchase, Raffles shook his head and went his way laughing.

Before venturing again into Mr. Brunton’s “office,” as an inscription over the private door proclaimed it to be, I looked up and down the street to see that no one I knew was watching me. Then, feeling satisfied that I was not observed, I slunk in, and asked a young man who was standing behind the counter if Mr. Brunton was at home.

“He is, sir,” said the young man. “But perhaps it is something I can do for you?”

“I want to see him on private business. Take him my card, please, and this letter.”

The letter was from Florence, saying, in a few words, that she wished Mr. Brunton to see me about selling the concern.

“Mr. Woodhouse? Please come in,” said Mr. Brunton, motioning me into an inner-room. “Have you been long in the business?”

“I am a member of the Bar,” I replied, “and forbidden by its rules to trade.”

“Then you are not prepared to purchase?”

“I came here to talk with you about the best way of finding a purchaser.”

“I beg your pardon, sir. I did not mean to be uncivil. But gentlemen go into businesses of all kinds now. Well, you want to see me,” he continued, “about selling the concern. Dear me, what a pity to do so! A business that has been in the family for three generations, and that



brings in a clear four thousand a year. What I should advise would be to take down the sign altogether, and receive no petty pledges. We should then be as respectable as any bank."

"The pawnbroker may, I suppose, be looked upon as the banker of the poor?"

"Yes, and the banker of the rich also. You should see the diamonds that are brought here toward the end of the London season. I believe we have lent money to every reigning family in Europe, bar one."

"There is a good deal no doubt to be said on both sides of the question. But the business is in any case to be sold. Now, how are we to set about it?"

"By an advertisement in the 'Pawnbroker's Gazette.'"

"Why not advertise in the 'Times'?"

"That might also be done. We should be addressing, of course, a wider public, though I don't think there's much chance of getting a customer outside the trade. There has been a gentleman already in treaty for it," continued Mr. Brunton—old Reuben Malachi."

"A Hebrew gentleman, I imagine."

"Yes, I fancy he's a Jew. But whatever he is, he does not offer money enough. Perhaps when he sees the advertisement, and knows what it refers to, he will spring a little."

"Is it any use my going to see him?"

"Well, perhaps it might be. He said of his own accord that he'd give eight thousand, which means twelve thousand if he can not get it for less."

Mr. Malachi lived in Craven Street, Strand, and I deter-



mined to go and see him at once. Just as I was going out I looked down the shop, and saw behind a long counter a number of separate boxes like stalls in a stable, in which stood the customers, who had come to make offerings at the Temple of the Three Balls. One of them was that same Augustus Raffles, who had been pleased to jest at my supposed intention to do the very thing which he this moment was engaged upon. Raffles, in other words, was pawning his watch. In the box next to him was a miserable, besotted-looking woman, who wished to raise money on a rich sealskin jacket, evidently not her own. One of the shopmen was questioning her about it, and she said it was the property of Miss Ada Montmorency, who had sent her out to pledge it. In a third box there was a quiet-looking young man in a threadbare coat, who proffered as security a case of surgical instruments.

Raffles was too intent on getting as much money as he could for his watch to notice me; nor, in my hurried passage from Mr. Brunton's office through the end of the shop to the street, did I give him much time to do so. It struck me, however, that before the business was given up it might be interesting to study the persons of such different kinds who came to Mr. Brunton's in search of ready cash. To avoid being recognized by impecunious and reckless friends, like Mr. Augustus Raffles, it would be necessary to adopt some disguise. A wig, for instance, a pair of false whiskers, a shirt collar of the last fashion but one, and a pair of spectacles.

While thinking the matter over I made my way toward Craven Street, and at No. 80, almost the last house in the



street at the river end, found Mr. Malachi's abode. He was a little hook-nosed, grisly old man, with an exterior which gave no sign of the wealth he was said to possess. When I mentioned to him the business on which I had called, he began by protesting that too much money was asked. If, he said, seven or eight thousand would be accepted, he thought he could introduce a party; but beyond eight thousand he would not go. I told him that the business was valued by Mr. Brunton at fifteen thousand, but that the proprietors whom Mr. Brunton represented would accept twelve, adding that this was their lowest price. Mr. Malachi declared that eight thousand was all that it was worth. On that I told him that we were advertising for a purchaser, and that in the course of a few days we should close with the highest offer, which might possibly be more than twelve thousand. He then altered his tone and said he would see what could be done if he were first allowed to inspect the books. To this I agreed; and, after leaving him, I returned to Mr. Brunton to say that Mr. Malachi would call, and that the books were to be shown to him. I added that there was a chance of his giving twelve thousand pounds for the business; in which case he was to have it, irrespectively of such answers as the advertisements might bring.

I wished, as I was sure Florence and her two brothers also did, to get rid of the concern with as little publicity as possible; and though Mr. Malachi would probably not give full value for it, he was prepared to purchase it from Mr. Brunton direct, whereas other buyers might have asked troublesome questions as to whether Mr. Brunton was



really the proprietor, and, if not, who there was in the background.

As Malachi would be some time making a thorough examination of the books it was arranged that he should have a clear week given him for an answer. Florence, when I took her the news, was delighted; and it was arranged that our marriage should take place as soon as the sale had been effected. She was amused at my idea of putting on a disguise and watching the customers as they came in with their pledges of various kinds. But she did not think I really meant to carry it out until I called the next morning wearing false hair, a false beard, and a pair of green spectacles."

"Your make-up is very effective," she said. "But I want you to pay some visits with me to-day. So for the present you must postpone your entertainment."

"Where do you propose to go?" I asked.

"To Mrs. Walsingham's. She is going to invite you to her ball; but I want her to see you first. And to Lady Fortescue's—one of our neighbors in the country—who is now up in London; and Mrs. Effington's, the wife of an officer in Tom's regiment. And then you must not forget that my brother William is to dine with us—the clergyman, you know."

"All right," I said. "I will take a cab to the Temple, and as soon as I have had time to resume my usual appearance, will come back." I had of course thoroughly "dressed" the part I proposed to play; that is to say, I had put on clothes of becoming antiquity to suit the solemn wig and the venerable beard.



Lady Fortescue expected us at lunch-time. Several people had been asked to meet us; and as Mrs. Walsingham was among them we deferred our visit to that lady until another day.

Florence introduced me to a man named Rupert Trevelyan, who, she told me, was a great friend of both her brothers. He seemed much interested in a Miss Ethel Montcalm, a slight, delicate girl with a pale complexion, and with eyes and hair as black as ink. Miss Montcalm, on her side, divided her attention impartially between Mr. Trevelyan and a sandy-haired, sallow-complexioned man with enormous feet, who was introduced to me as Mr. Brownlow. The young lady, who was engrossing the attention of the two men, could not, I thought, have much taste, unless she preferred the manly, brown-visaged Trevelyan to his bilious-looking, splay-footed rival. Whether such was the case I could not tell by any direct evidence; for Miss Montcalm held herself impartially between her two admirers—whether because she cared for both, or because she cared for neither, or because she wished to play off one against the other, or simply because she did not choose to reveal her preferences in mixed company, I of course could not tell.

Mr. Brownlow was, I was told, a very rich man. Mr. Trevelyan, who was an Indian official on leave, had no money of his own, though he had good prospects, in the well-paid service to which he belonged.

“And which of them,” I said to Florence, when she gave me this information, “will she marry?”

“Of course she prefers Rupert. Indeed she is very much



attached to him. But her family want her to marry Mr. Brownlow, who is immensely rich.”

“ Besides, they probably don’t want to lose her. If she marries Mr. Trevelyan she will, of course, have to go back to India with him.”

“ Exactly so. But I don’t think she will ever marry Mr. Brownlow, whether she gives up Rupert or not. Rupert is an excellent fellow. My brothers, who know him well, have the highest opinion of him; and he will be quite heartbroken if she throws him over.”

Lunch being at an end, Florence and myself had a long conversation in the drawing-room with Mr. Trevelyan, who, after a time, began to talk to us about his matrimonial prospects. Miss Montcalm’s parents would, he said, consent to his marriage with their daughter Ethel, if he could settle a sum of four thousand pounds upon her. He had proposed to insure his life for that amount, but by reason of his residence in India he would have to pay considerably more than the ordinary rate, and this, deducted from his salary, would not allow them enough to live on with any degree of comfort. Ethel, he said, had no money of her own, and he did not think it altogether unreasonable that her parents, rich as they were, should insist on her being provided for in case of his premature death. But it was difficult for him all the same to raise the sum required. “ My brothers would lend it him, and so would I, most willingly,” said Florence, after he had left us, “ but from some mistaken notion of dignity he will not accept it.”

I could not but hope that Mr. Trevelyan would find some way out of his difficulty; though who was to help



him if he refused assistance at the hands of his best friends? In the evening, after we had paid all our visits, Mr. Trevelyan joined us at dinner. The more I saw of him the more he interested me, and we soon became excellent friends. I found William Huntly rather more reserved than his brother Tom; but he seemed to have the same manly, generous disposition. He told me that he would do anything, no matter what, to help Rupert Trevelyan, and said what Florence had already given me to understand, that if Miss Montcalm's parents would only allow them to do so he and his brother would gladly settle the money upon her from their own resources. But even if the parents did consent, Rupert, he said, would not for a moment hear of such a thing.

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### CHAPTER III.

WHEN I told Mr. Brunton of my wish to see something of the inner life of the pawnbroking business, he at once entered into my idea. He assured me, however, that I should not find it so interesting as I probably anticipated.

“I know what you think, sir,” he said. “You fancy that when you have been dining with a duchess the night before she will turn up here the next morning to pawn her silver *aprons*. But that does not happen very often.”

I told Mr. Brunton that I knew very few duchesses—except, of course, Neapolitan ones; and that I had never suspected them of pledging anything more valuable than their affections. As for their aprons—



“I did not mean *aprons*, sir,” interrupted Mr. Brunton; “I meant a-perns—the things they place on the dinner-tables with flowers in them. The Duchess di Malfi sent in two beauties the week before last, and took away £180 on them. They were brought here by her butler—an Italian, like herself. But there are ladies, of course, who would not trust their servants in such a matter for fear of its getting known. They would come themselves, or more probably would ask us to wait on them.”

Mr. Brunton had, I believe, an uneasy suspicion that I wanted to learn for myself what amount of business, day by day, was done. He, at all events, pointed out to me that this could be ascertained, beyond the possibility of doubt, from the books. I assured him that there could be no question of want of confidence on my part, and that my only object was to study human nature, and to see for myself the unhappy, or simply heedless, persons who found themselves compelled by necessity, or by their own vices, to sacrifice, after the manner of vicious people in general, the future to the present.

“All right, sir,” said Mr. Brunton. “Would you like to take the things in yourself?”

“That,” I said, “would scarcely be necessary.”

“No, sir; you wouldn’t know how to value them. You would probably lend too much.”

“Or too little,” I suggested.

“That wouldn’t matter, sir. Besides, if you offered too little they would go away. They are quite as knowing as we are. Indeed, they generally do their best to take us in.”

It was arranged that I should have the free run of the



shop, and I spent some hours watching the customers—some of them miserable, some dissipated, some commonplace, some assignable to no recognized category—who offered rags or gold as security for the ready money they were in need of. The sight of so much wretchedness, perversity, or simple folly was not exhilarating; and after a few hours, heartily sick of what I had seen, I was about to leave the place, when suddenly Mr. Brunton said to me,

“Here is a case, sir, in which we should like to have your opinion. A young man wants a sovereign on this picture.”

The presumable author of the work was a pale, slight, interesting, bright-eyed, rather long-haired little man, who seemed scarcely more than twenty years of age. Unwilling, beneath the painter's very eyes, to examine the picture with the brutal exactness required by the circumstances, I took it into a room at the back—Mr. Brunton's so-called “office”—and looked at it very carefully. It was a portrait of Lord Beaconsfield—Mr. Disraeli as he then was—and, without much artistic merit, was nevertheless a marvelous likeness; so like, indeed, that it bordered on caricature, and made one smile to look at it. In spite of a certain delicacy about penetrating the secret of the young man's poverty, I could not help asking him a few questions, which, in the mouth of an apparent pawnbroker, were perhaps out of place.

“I will give you the sovereign with pleasure,” I said; and taking one out of my waistcoat-pocket, I handed it to him. “But when you paint as well as this you ought not to be in want of such a small sum.”



“My eyes are not very good; and during the best light I have to work at other things. Otherwise I might perhaps do better,” he replied.

“But why don’t you go to a picture-dealer?”

“I did so before coming here, but I was only offered twelve shillings.”

I was glad to know that the young man would not think I was behaving shabbily to him in lending him only a sovereign. As he did not go away I asked him with whom he was studying. He replied, what I had already supposed was the case, that he studied with no one. He was self-taught, he said, and painted only for his own amusement until one day, when he was very much in want of money, it occurred to him that if he did portraits of a few celebrated men of the day he might possibly be able to sell them. He had tried some well-known dealers with a portrait of the Emperor Napoleon; but they refused to treat with him, and told him, contemptuously, to take it to the pawnbroker’s. Thereupon he brought it to Mr. Brunton, who had lent him ten shillings on it.

“This is not the way we do business, sir,” whispered Mr. Brunton, at this moment. “We never give all that’s asked; and that is precisely why the young man wanted so much. Besides, he must have a ticket.”

“Make it out, please,” I said; and thereupon Mr. Brunton wrote on a small square of cardboard a receipt for a picture, on which the sum of £1 had been advanced.

“What name shall we say?” asked Mr. Brunton.

“I think it was Brown last time,” answered the young artist. “Suppose we give Smith a turn for a change;”



and having received the ticket, he looked at it with half-closed eyes and said,

“I can’t see what name you have written. It looks like Jones. But it doesn’t matter. Good-afternoon;” and he left the office, evidently well satisfied with the result of his visit.

“He is a clever young man,” I said, “and has artistic vision, in spite of his weak eyes. That portrait is very striking.”

“He is one of Malachi’s clerks,” said Mr. Brunton.

“What! Malachi the money-lender, who is in treaty for this business?”

“Yes, sir; the same. If he knew the young man found time to paint portraits he would stop it out of his wages.”

“I would willingly have given a sovereign for the picture myself.”

“Then you should have bought it from him, sir. He would have been very glad to sell it. Now we shall have to keep it for a year, and then put it up at auction, and I shall be very much astonished if we get our money back.”

The incident of the picture had interested me, and I thought I would now wait a little time longer at Mr. Brunton’s, on the chance of some like thing occurring. I was soon rewarded by the appearance of a little boy, apparently about ten years of age, who entered one of the boxes, and in a piping voice called out,

“What can you lend me on my horse and cart?”

“Your horse and cart, my little man?” said Mr. Brunton, as he examined the toy which the child, with a business-like air, had deposited on the counter. “We haven’t



any stables here. Besides, your horse would eat too much corn. You had better go back as fast as you can to your mother, and tell her I said so."

"What do you want the money for, my child?" I asked.

"Want to buy some sweets," he said.

"Well, here's twopence for you. Take your horse and cart away, and if you ever come here again you will be given in charge, and the police will whip you."

The boy looked very much astonished, then laughed, as if he quite entered into the spirit of the jest, and went away.

"He knew you were chaffing him, sir," said Mr. Brunton.

"But I was not. I was quite serious."

"His mother sends him here with spoons and forks, and anything she can raise money upon. She spends the cash in gin. The child, for the present, does not go beyond lollypops."

A flashily attired young woman now came in, with what she called a diamond brooch, which turned out to be a brooch ornamented with crystals of the first quality.

"Any inexperienced person," said Mr. Brunton, "might well mistake them for brilliants." But he knew better; and the owner of the brooch had to take it away.

I now once more prepared to go. But one of the assistants was just then attending to a gentleman who wanted to borrow twenty-five pounds on a diamond ring; and as I was about to leave the shop the man brought it to Mr. Brunton, who, calling my attention to the stone, said in a low voice,



“There’s no mistake about this. I should be very glad to buy it for thirty or forty.”

The diamond was indeed a large one, and it was richly set.

“Light the gas,” called out Mr. Brunton. “It shines in the dusk like a star,” he whispered to me; “but I should like to examine it by gas-light all the same.”

It was now about five o’clock, or even later; and the growing darkness of an October afternoon could scarcely be favorable for the valuation of precious stones.

“I could make it twenty,” said Mr. Brunton, addressing the man who had brought the ring. He had subjected it to a close scrutiny, and had satisfied himself that the diamond was genuine, and worth much more than the sum for which it was offered. But on principle, and as a matter of habit, he was unwilling to give the full amount required.

“Make it twenty, then,” said the man.

I fancied, as he spoke, that I had heard his voice before. I looked at him through my green spectacles, and saw that it was Mr. Brownlow, of the bilious countenance and the massive feet. However, it was not my affair if this millionaire found himself momentarily in want of twenty pounds; and I felt at least as anxious to hide my identity from him as he, I knew, would be to conceal his from me.

“What name, sir?” said Mr. Brunton, as he himself made out the ticket.

“Mr. Huntingdon,” was the reply, “12 Southampton Street, Bedford Square.”

“My friend lies with precision,” I said to myself; for



Mr. Brownlow, as I happened to have heard, was staying at Long's Hotel in Bond Street. However, Mr. Brunton had already told me that it was not usual in these cases to insist on the real name and address. So I behaved to Mr. Brownlow as, under like circumstances, I should have wished him to behave to me. I abstained, that is to say, from all interference in his business; and he went away with Mr. Brunton's twenty pounds in his pocket. As soon as he had gone I told Mr. Brunton that he had given a false name and address.

"That doesn't matter, sir," said Mr. Brunton. "I suppose if you know him he's all right."

"He is said to be a very rich man; but there must be some mistake about that."

"Why so, sir? Rich men are sometimes in want of money as well as poor ones."

"A rich man has an account of some kind at his banker's; and he can always get a check changed at his club, or at his hotel, if, like Mr. Brownlow, he is staying at one."

"But he may be a mile or two away from his hotel or his club, and may want the money immediately. Knowing what I do of this trade, and of the sort of people who come here, I can think of half a dozen reasons for which he might have wanted five, or ten, or twenty pounds, at a moment's notice. He might, for instance, have wanted to make a present; to buy a piece of jewelry, and take it away with him from some particular shop."

"Couldn't he have ordered it to be sent home to him?"

"Not if he wanted it immediately. Not if the young lady he intended it for was waiting in the shop for him to



pay the bill. Gentlemen who refuse themselves nothing, will sometimes do the strangest things on the spur of the moment."

"Well, it's not my affair," I said. "It rests between you and—this gentleman. Mr. Huntingdon he calls himself, doesn't he?"

"Mr. Huntingdon is the name he gave me."

"I sha'n't tell anything. I disguised myself, not that I might divulge secrets, but simply to see what was going on."

"I hope it has interested you, sir?"

"Yes, it certainly has. I used to look upon it as a very hard-hearted business. But the people who come here seem for the most part to get what they want, and they all go away with a contented air. Nor are they to be pitied so much as I had imagined—except, perhaps, that young artist and the medical student who pawned his instruments. I am really very sorry for both of them."

"You gave Malachi's clerk more than his picture was worth, sir, and that reminds me—"

Mr. Brunton went to the till, and taking out a sovereign, handed it to me in lieu of the one which I had advanced out of my own pocket to the painter of Mr. Disraeli's portrait.

It was now six o'clock, and at seven I was to dine with Florence and her two brothers in Norfolk Street, Park Lane. It was high time then for me to go back to the Temple and dress.

I had not, meanwhile, heard anything more from Mr. Malachi about the business; and though it is never good



policy to press an intending purchaser for a decision, I thought, if time permitted, I might as well look in for a moment at Craven Street to ask him when he proposed to inspect the books. Then it seemed to me that it would be better to dress first and call at Craven Street afterward, on my way to Park Lane.

But when I left the Temple it was already a quarter to seven, so that I had only just time, in a swift hansom cab, to get to Florence's by the dinner hour. Mr. Trevelyan drove up to the door at the same time as myself, and we went in together.

"You seem in good spirits, Rupert," said Tom Huntly, as Trevelyan shook hands with him.

"Yes," said Mr. Trevelyan, "I have settled the business at last. It was a difficult matter; but I have arranged it now. I can put down the money as soon as my stern old father-in-law desires."

"Your father-in-law!" said Florence, who was amused as well as pleased at Trevelyan's now confident manner. "I am glad to hear you give him that name. But do not tempt the fates. There's many a slip, you know. Have you read Alfred de Musset's '*La Coupe et le Lèvre*'?"

"Of course I have. But I don't think in my case there is any jealous rival to fear."

"Of the two rivals, if rivals they ever were," said Florence, "the jealous one was certainly not Mr. Brownlow."

"It was not jealousy. It was restless anxiety caused by the prospect of losing what rightfully belonged to me; intense annoyance at seeing an odious man lying in wait for what, by everything sacred, was already my own."



“Brownlow,” said Tom Huntly, “is so rich that he will find plenty of young women ready to console him.”

“I am afraid so,” said Florence.

Dinner, meanwhile, was going on, and on the production of the champagne, formal congratulations were offered to the fortunate Rupert Trevelyan. We had nearly finished when the voices of two men were heard crying outside the window, in tones of well assumed earnestness, the news of some horrible murder.

“Frightful murder!” roared the newspaper venders. “Frightful murder in the Strand!”

“Do you want a paper?” I said to Florence. “Are you going to send out for one?”

“No, I don’t care about murders, and it’s not at all certain that a murder has been committed. Besides, we don’t know any one in the Strand. These men have always some sensational piece of news to announce.”

“Frightful murder!” shouted one of the voices again. “Frightful murder in Craven Street, Strand! The victim shot with a drawing-room pistol! Escape of the assassin! Tremendous excitement in the neighborhood!”

“That is worth a penny,” I said. “If it hadn’t been rather late I should have been in Craven Street myself this afternoon, and perhaps in that case the assassin would not have escaped. I might have captured him.”

“I am very glad you did not,” said Florence. “He would probably have shot you as he shot the other man.”

“What, with a drawing-room pistol? I don’t think so. It would not have hurt me much if he had. A drawing-room pistol carries a bullet about as big as a pea.”



One of the servants who had been sent out for a "Globe" now returned, saying that he had been obliged to pay twopence for it. I found, to my horror—though I had never seen him but once—that the man assassinated was Reuben Malachi.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

I THOUGHT I was the only person at table who knew Reuben Malachi; but it seemed that Trevelyan was also acquainted with him. Florence had never heard of him; nor had either of her brothers. I, as already mentioned, had made his acquaintance through Mr. Brunton. But what could Trevelyan have had to do with him? Then it suddenly struck me that it was through Reuben Malachi, who was a notorious money-lender, that he, perhaps, had raised the four thousand pounds which he was to settle on his future wife.

"You had not seen him lately?" I suggested.

"This very afternoon about four o'clock. Or rather not so late; for I took his check to the bank and got it cashed just before the hour of closing. It is very dreadful," he said; and he evidently thought so, for he was as white as ashes.

"You don't mean to say you had dealings with him," exclaimed William Huntly, the clergyman.

"My transaction was a very simple one," said Trevelyan; and he was about to tell us all about it, when suddenly the servant came in and said:



“There is a gentleman here wishes very particularly to see Mr. Trevelyan. Where am I to show him?”

But there was no necessity for discussing this last point; for behind the footman could be seen the figure of the man who had just called.

“Tell him to come out here!” whispered the man.

Trevelyan left the room, and immediately outside was confronted by the visitor, who simply observed that he had a warrant for his arrest, and that a cab was waiting outside.

“Let me wish my friends good-night,” said Mr. Trevelyan.

The Huntlys and myself, seeing that something serious was taking place, had now gone forward.

“What are you arresting him for?” asked Tom Huntly.

“It’s about this murder,” said the officer.

“How horrible!” I exclaimed. “But surely bail will be accepted?”

“The magistrate is not sitting, and I don’t think it would be accepted by the inspector at the station.”

“Can we accompany him?” I asked.

“Certainly not. But you can come on by yourselves. We are going to Bow Street.”

Trevelyan was now hurried into a four-wheeled cab, in which were seated two other policemen; not, like the one who had arrested him, in plain clothes, but in full uniform.”

“We will do our best for you; and it will be easy enough to make it all clear,” said Tom Huntly, as he shook his friend by the hand.



“You may count upon me, Trevelyan, if I can be of any aid,” I said. “We shall be at the police office almost as soon as you.”

Florence, whom we now rejoined in the dining-room, was in a state of the utmost consternation.

“We know no more about it than you do,” I said to her. “I had to see the unfortunate Malachi about that business matter. I will explain it to your brother as we go along; for we have promised to follow Trevelyan to the police office. As for Trevelyan himself, he told us just now that he saw Reuben Malachi this afternoon, before the closing of the banks—before four o’clock, that is to say; and according to the newspaper report he was murdered between four and five.”

“No one,” exclaimed Florence, “supposes for a moment that Rupert Trevelyan could be guilty of such a crime. But don’t let me keep you any longer. Come back and tell me, however late it may be, all you can find out; and do make them release him. You and my brothers, I am sure, would be bail for any amount.”

“Of course your brothers would,” I answered, “and so most readily would I.”

When we got to the police-station which—driving in a hansom, we did before the policemen and their unhappy prisoner, who were in a four-wheeler—the inspector told us that it was useless to mention the subject of bail. As we were speaking to him Trevelyan was brought in. He was asked his name—Rupert Trevelyan; his age—28; his address—14, Half Moon Street, Piccadilly; and his occupation—clerk in the Indian Civil Service. He was then



taken away to a cell, while we were told to come again the next morning at ten o'clock, when the case would be brought before the magistrate. Then it would be for him to decide whether or not bail could be accepted.

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## CHAPTER V.

It was between ten and eleven o'clock when we got back to Florence's. It was too late for Tom to get to Aldershot that night. The last train had already started. It was necessary, however, as he had no leave, that he should be at the camp the first thing in the morning. This he proposed to manage by taking the funeral train which leaves (or at that time left) Waterloo Station for Woking Cemetery at three in the morning; a train run specially for the dead, but which generally carried a few young officers, alive to the pleasures of the metropolis.

But how could Tom get back to London in time to be at the police office by ten o'clock? For his consolation I told him that the magistrate only took his seat at ten o'clock, and that what are called the night cases would have to be disposed of before the important inquiry of the day was entered upon. Then the evidence would probably occupy some time; though what that evidence might be I had not the slightest idea.

He in fact managed to be at Bow Street by eleven o'clock. He had seen the colonel of his regiment at an early parade, had obtained a day's leave, and had started for London at nine.

Meanwhile I had written to my solicitor, Mr. Wigram,



at his private address, begging him to start for his office in Lincoln's Inn Fields on the receipt of my letter. He was there soon after nine o'clock next morning, and found me waiting for him. There was no time to instruct first-rate counsel, or I should have liked Trevelyan's cause to have been placed in better hands than mine. The solicitor begged me, however, to go down to the court in my forensic robes, and I hurried to the Temple to put them on, while Mr. Wigram went to Bow Street, in order to have an interview with the unfortunate prisoner. Mr. Wigram and myself met at the court just as the clock was striking ten, and the simple line of conduct I had to pursue was quickly decided upon.

The evidence against Trevelyan was of the kind known as circumstantial; and to those who knew him it carried no weight whatever. The chief witness against him was, to my astonishment—though there was nothing very wonderful in the fact—the young artist who had pawned the portrait of Lord Beaconsfield the afternoon before at Mr. Brunton's. His name was neither Smith, Brown, nor Jones. He was summoned as Robert Marsden; and his evidence was to the effect that at half past three o'clock on the previous afternoon he had seen Mr. Trevelyan at the office of his employer, Mr. Malachi. He knew Mr. Trevelyan well, from having seen him several times at the office, and from having sold him a number of water-color sketches. Mr. Trevelyan had come to the office on business. It was not his, Mr. Marsden's, business to sketch the portraits of notabilities, and to sell them to Mr. Malachi's customers. But Mr. Malachi paid him a very



small salary, only ten shillings a week; and this he was obliged to supplement as best he could. He made portraits from memory, either during Mr. Malachi's absence or after office hours; though having delicate eyes he could only work with a good light. He knew why Mr. Trevelyan had come to the office. He had been there on and off for the last month, trying to borrow money from Mr. Malachi. But he wanted a great deal; first six thousand, then five, until at last he came down to four. He knew the amount, because the accused had talked openly about it to Mr. Malachi in his presence. About the particulars of the loan, when it was to be repaid, or what security was offered, he knew nothing.

The witness went on to depose that he had last seen Mr. Trevelyan at about a quarter to four on the previous afternoon, when, on leaving the office he got into a cab which was waiting for him at the door, and told the driver to go as fast as he could to the Strand branch of the London and Westminster Bank, near the Temple. Mr. Trevelyan and Mr. Malachi had been doing business together in the inner room, and just as Mr. Trevelyan opened the door to come out, he heard Mr. Malachi say to him: "The check is payable to order, but you had better give me a receipt and say what it is for." Then Mr. Trevelyan wrote something, after which he and Mr. Malachi came out together. Finally Mr. Trevelyan said to Mr. Malachi, "I must be off," and shook hands with him.

Before that he had heard something like a dispute going on, but nothing that could be called a quarrel.

The prosecution was directed by the late Mr. Malachi's



brothers, Mr. Ernest Vavasour and Mr. Reginald Talbot, who, in abandoning the faith of their fathers, had at the same time changed their names—let us hope for the better. The counsel they had engaged, Mr. Sargent Valentine, seemed to think that the evidence up to this point did not tell very strongly against the prisoner; and this was certainly my own impression. Robert Marsden declared, meanwhile, that he had stated all he knew in regard to Mr. Trevelyan's dealings with Mr. Malachi on the previous afternoon—the afternoon of the murder.

“After the prisoner left,” said Sergeant Valentine, “you went out on some private business of your own. When did you return?”

“In about three quarters of an hour.”

“What did you then see?”

“I entered the house with my key, and when I got to the office saw a man with a small box in his hand. He started when he saw me, pushed by me and made for the street.”

“You did not try to stop him?”

“I was taken by surprise. Besides, he turned the gas out the moment he saw me, and then pushed against me and made his way to the door.”

“You saw him quite plainly?”

“Yes; the light was full upon his face when I went in.”

“You had never seen him before?”

“Never.”

“You swear that?”

“I do.”



“He resembled no one you had ever seen before?”

“He was like a good many other fair men; for I could see that he was fair. But he resembled no one that I knew, no one that I was at all acquainted with.”

“You know the prisoner at the bar, do you not? You have already said so.”

“Yes, I know Mr. Trevelyan.”

“How did you become acquainted with him?”

“He happened to see a head I had just been drawing; a portrait of Signor Mario, whom I had heard the night before at the opera. He thought it very like, and gave me a guinea for it.”

“Did he often buy pictures of you?”

“Yes, on several occasions. Altogether, crayons and water-colors, he bought half a dozen.”

“And he always paid you well for them?”

“He paid me what I asked for them; half a guinea for the small ones, and a guinea for the large ones.”

“And you are quite sure that the last time you saw him was yesterday afternoon, at a little before four o’clock?”

“At a quarter to four. I saw him for the last time when he got into the cab.”

“You didn’t see him again until he was placed in the dock this morning?”

“I did not.”

“After the man whom you could not recognize had rushed out with the box in his hand, did you follow him?”

“I did. I ran out into the street; but it was very dark, my eyes are bad, and it was impossible for me to distinguish him.”



“Then you went back to the office?”

“I did.”

“What did you do next?”

“I lighted the gas and went into the inner room, where I saw Mr. Malachi seated before his desk quite motionless. The gas in this room had been put out, and when I looked a little more closely I saw that Mr. Malachi was dead, and that the floor all round him was drenched with blood.”

“What else did you see?”

“I did not wait to see any more. I rushed outside and knocked at the house of Mr. Judkins, an engraver, who lives next door.”

Mr. Judkins was then called.

Mr. Judkins deposed that at about half-past four or a quarter to five on the previous afternoon, Robert Marsden knocked loudly at his door, and on his answering it informed him that his employer, Mr. Malachi, had been murdered. He told Marsden to run as fast as he could to the Charing Cross Hospital for a surgeon, and he also told his assistant to go to Scotland Yard and bring a policeman, or to stop the first one he met. He then went round to Mr. Malachi's office.

Sergeant Valentine asked him what first struck him when he entered the room. He noticed above all, he said, the position of the body, which was seated in a chair with the head resting on a writing-table or desk just in front. There was a pen between the dead man's fingers and his hand rested on a sheet of paper which bore the office address, and on which were written the words, “Dear Sir, In consideration—” Then there was a blot and nothing



more. The trousers of the dead man were smeared with blood, and there was blood around him on the floor. He (witness) remained not more than half a minute in the room, and then went to the door to await the arrival of the surgeon.

Mr. Roberts, house-surgeon at Charing Cross Hospital, described the position in which he found the body. There was no longer the least sign of life. He felt the pulse, and placed his hand to the heart, but life was quite extinct. The only wound was a very small one, a mere puncture at the back of the neck. But it was quite sufficient to cause death, which must have been instantaneous. He looked in vain for some weapon with which the wound might have been inflicted. But Inspector Robins from Scotland Yard had found in the outer room a drawing-room pistol which had just been discharged, and which was evidently the arm that had been employed. The caliber of the pistol was very small, and its report would scarcely be heard in the next house or in the street. On examining the wound a second time he had noticed that the short hairs round it were singed; a proof that the shot had been fired with the muzzle close to the unfortunate man's neck. He had evidently been writing a letter at the time; and the assassin, leaning over him, as if to read its contents, had held the pistol to his neck just above the spine, where the smallest shot could not penetrate without destroying life. The pistol bore the mark "Devisme, Paris." There was no other indication to show whence it came.

Hitherto there was nothing to criminate Rupert Trevelyan more than the clerk himself or any one who might have



seen Reuben Malachi shortly before his death. The assassin, to my mind, was beyond doubt the man with the box in his hand who, on seeing Robert Marsden, had suddenly turned out the gas and made his escape; and the apparent wish on the part of the prosecution to identify this man with Rupert Trevelyan had entirely broken down, since he was fair, whereas Trevelyan was dark. Moreover, the clerk, Robert Marsden, knew the one quite well, whereas he had never before seen the other.

A new witness was now called; Mr. Lumley, a clerk at the Strand branch of the London and Westminster Bank. Mr. Lumley proved that Rupert Trevelyan had presented just as the bank was about to close Mr. Malachi's check for four thousand pounds, and had received payment in the form of forty hundred-pound notes. The check was payable to the order of Rupert Trevelyan, and the prisoner had indorsed it at the bank while the clerk was looking on.

Inspector Robins now deposed that he had gone to the prisoner's lodgings in Half Moon Street between seven and eight o'clock, on the evening of the murder, with a search-warrant and a warrant for arrest, and that on breaking open his desk he had found within it a few loose sovereigns and forty hundred-pound notes. The witness produced the notes, and the numbers were found to correspond with those which the clerk had copied from the books at the bank. The notes were then ordered to be impounded. On this evidence Sergeant Valentine demanded that the prisoner be committed for trial.

I, on my part, submitted that there was no evidence on which the prisoner could be committed. The unhappy



man who had been so foully murdered was, I said, a money-lender and a dealer in precious stones. The accused had gone to him to effect, not a loan, but a sale. He had offered him several weeks before some very valuable diamonds which he had inherited from his mother. He had at first proposed to leave them with Mr. Malachi as security for a loan of four thousand pounds. But the parties could not agree about terms, and it was at last arranged that Mr. Malachi, instead of lending the sum, which was required for a special purpose, should give it as purchase-money, the jewels thus becoming his absolute property. My client, though he had not published the state of his affairs to the whole world, had made no secret among his intimate friends of his being in want of funds in view of a particular object; and more than one of these friends had offered to advance him the money by way of loan. To obtain it, therefore, it would not have been necessary for him to commit a murder—and this, apart from the fact that he had always borne the highest character for probity and honor. But there was not the slightest evidence to connect the prisoner with this atrocious crime. He had seen Reuben Malachi at half-past three, and, according to the clerk, Robert Marsden—the only important witness in the case—had left the office at a quarter to four. At a few minutes to four he was at the bank. Before five he was at his lodgings; and he had walked there, calling, as could be proved, at a club and at a private house on his way. At his lodgings he had dressed for dinner and, going out a few minutes before seven, had taken a cab to Norfolk Street, Park Lane, where, an hour and a half or two hours later he was arrest-



ed. Not only was there nothing to connect the prisoner with the murder, but the principal witness in the case had sworn that, suddenly returning to the office, he saw a stranger bearing no resemblance to the accused, but, on the contrary, strikingly different in appearance; for the unknown man, the criminal as I believed him to be, was fair, whereas Mr. Trevelyan was dark. That the unknown man had been engaged in some nefarious pursuit was shown by the alacrity with which on being seen he had turned the gas out. The accused had, it was true, received Mr. Malachi's check for a large sum, and had cashed it immediately afterward. But there was nothing strange in that. It would have been strange if, after receiving payment of the check in bank-notes, he had left the country or had even sought to conceal himself. He had gone back to his lodgings, however, where he had locked up the money in his desk, and had afterward dined with some intimate friends to whom the first thing he said, on entering the house, was that he had arranged matters at last, and that he had in his possession the sum which, for a particular purpose, he had so urgently required.

Mr. Thomas Huntly, lieutenant in the 8th Dragoon Guards, was the only witness I had to call. He deposed that, to his knowledge, the accused had for some time past wanted four thousand pounds in view of a marriage settlement, and that he and his brother, the Rev. William Huntly, had both offered, separately or conjointly, to lend him the sum. The accused had at last succeeded in raising it for himself, and the evening before he had of his own accord mentioned this to the friends with whom he was din-



ing, the witness being himself among them. On the ground that there was no evidence against the prisoner I now applied for his discharge.

Sergeant Valentine said that he must oppose the application. The murder had evidently been committed by the person Robert Marsden had surprised in the office between four and five o'clock, and who on being observed had turned the gas out, pushed the clerk out of the way, and made his escape. There was nothing as yet to prove the identity of this man with the prisoner in the dock. But the fact of his being described as fair, while the prisoner was dark, amounted to very little. There were such things as fair wigs and fair whiskers.

I felt very awkward when this observation was made, reminding me, as it did, of the wig and beard which, with the most innocent object, I had myself put on.

The evidence against the prisoner, continued Sergeant Valentine, was not, perhaps, crushing and conclusive, but it was sufficiently strong to render it very unadvisable, in the present state of the proceedings, to set him free.

I was about to reply, when the magistrate asked Sergeant Valentine if he should have any further evidence to offer. Sergeant Valentine replied promptly that he should, and thereupon the unhappy man was remanded for a week. I asked that he might be liberated on bail, saying that security would be forthcoming to any amount. But the magistrate refused.

The same afternoon an inquest was held, when a verdict of willful murder was returned against Rupert Trevelyan.



## CHAPTER VI.

ON the news of Trevelyan's arrest reaching Miss Montcalm—the girl to whom he was to be married—she fell into despair. He had written to her at five on the previous afternoon telling her that he was in possession of the money required for the settlement. Next morning she received a letter from Florence preparing her for the shock she could not fail to receive on seeing it announced in the papers that he had been arrested, and was about to be brought before the magistrate on a charge of murder.

Immediately after the examination I called on Miss Montcalm with Florence, and found her quivering with excitement; more indignant, I thought, at the falseness of the accusation, than terrified at the thought of Trevelyan's being convicted.

“I knew,” she said, “that he was going to raise money on his mother's diamonds. He has been trying to do so for the last three weeks, only the wretched man offered him such infamous terms. He would have lent him a good portion of the money at ruinous interest; but the jewels could never have been redeemed, and the amount offered was not sufficient for what was wanted. But, dear me, there was no secret about it! He told me, and I believe you knew of it.”

“Yes,” said Florence, “he mentioned it to me, and we all knew that he was ready to part with everything he had in the world in order to raise the money.”



“I didn’t know, Ethel,” said Mr. Montcalm, who had just entered the room; “I had no idea he was so hard pressed.”

“Yes,” cried Miss Montcalm, “if it had not been for you this would never have happened!”

“How do you mean? What would never have happened?” exclaimed Mr. Montcalm, as though a direct charge of murder had been made against *him*.

“Rupert would not have parted with the diamonds at all. He would have had no dealings with that wretched man.”

“You mean, I suppose,” said Mr. Montcalm, “the unhappy person who has been killed?”

“I do. The unhappy person, as you call him, however much he is to be pitied, was a bad man, and if you had not been so hard upon Rupert he would never have been driven to have dealings with him, and no pretext for this infamous charge would have existed. He ought to have married me without troubling himself about your consent. He is far too conscientious, and so am I.”

“You show that now by what you are saying,” replied Mr. Montcalm. “But I don’t want to vex you; I am heartily sorry for what has happened. Your name will be mixed up with it, and mine too.”

“Much I care for that!” exclaimed the indignant girl.

“My dear Ethel,” said Florence, “don’t be excited, or rather don’t let your excitement get the better of your reason. None of us could possibly foresee this dreadful affair. There is no one to blame in the matter except the wretch who committed the murder, and who has for the present



escaped. Mr. Woodhouse has just returned from the police court, and the evidence shows quite clearly that a man who has not yet been recognized went to Reuben Malachi's some time after Mr. Trevelyan, and being surprised turned the gas out and ran from the place. That this was the murderer can not be doubted."

"That is my full conviction," I chimed in.

"Then why don't they liberate Rupert? Is he still in charge?"

"I am sorry to say he is."

"There is some conspiracy against him!" Then, after a moment's pause, Miss Montcalm added: "Can I see him?"

"I believe you can," I replied.

"Where is he?"

"In the House of Detention at Clerkenwell. Tom Huntly has already gone to see if he can be of any use to him. If you will allow me to accompany you I can take you there."

"You are very good, I am sure," she said. "I will go at once; I will be ready in a moment."

And without waiting to ask her father's views on the subject she went upstairs, and came back half a minute afterward with her hat on. She was dreadfully sad, and I could not help remarking that she looked wonderfully interesting. Her face was paler than ever, and her eyes more intensely black. When we got outside and had taken a hansom she became comparatively cheerful. She was glad, no doubt, at having something to do. Anything in such a case is better than absolute inactivity.



Driving along the Bayswater Road we soon reached Oxford Street, and here demon boys, armed with early editions of the evening papers, were shouting in every tone: "The Craven Street Tragedy!" [It had lately become a "tragedy."] "Examination of the supposed murderer! Bail refused!"

"Stop and buy one," said Miss Montcalm. "I must see what has taken place."

"I can tell you everything precisely as it happened," I replied. "Mr. Trevelyan was seen at Reuben Malachi's between three and four, and received from him a check for four thousand pounds, as payment, no doubt, for the diamonds. The clerk saw him go away, and he left on good terms with Malachi. This same clerk went out, and coming back, saw another man in the office in no way resembling Mr. Trevelyan. This man, as Florence has already told you, put the gas out and ran into the street, and immediately afterward Reuben Malachi was found seated in a chair and leaning over his desk as if writing, but quite dead. When the surgeon and an inspector of police arrived it was found that Malachi had been shot in the nape of the neck with a drawing-room pistol carrying a bullet the size of a pea. The pistol was picked up in an outer room, where it had apparently been dropped by the assassin as he was making his escape."

"And what about the diamonds that Rupert had sold?"

"The man who made his escape—the assassin, that is to say—had a box of some kind in his hand. But beyond the facts I have told you nothing of the least importance has been established."



“What a fortunate thing Rupert made no secret about the sale.”

“I don’t suppose he told any one except you and Florence. But, as you say, he made no secret of the transaction. He received payment in a check payable to his own order, and changed it immediately afterward at the bank. The police found the notes at Half Moon Street locked up in his desk. He had evidently put the money away for the purpose you know of. He needed it for no other.”

“No, indeed,” cried the young girl, with a suppressed sob. “It is all through me!”

“Don’t say that!” I exclaimed. “Neither you, nor your father, nor, above all, Trevelyan himself, are in any way answerable for this terrible business. However, Trevelyan is now remanded, and as no further evidence is likely to be brought forward than what has already been produced, we must hope that in a week’s time he will be set free.”

We had now got as far as Tottenham Court Road, where the diabolical news-venders were calling out reports of the inquest with a verdict of willful murder against Rupert Trevelyan.

This was too much for Miss Montcalm. She fell back in the cab sobbing convulsively, so that I was alarmed for her bodily health, and was on the point of driving to the nearest doctor’s, when, stopping my upraised arm, she assured me that there was no necessity for going anywhere except to the prison. I told her that the verdict of the coroner’s jury was a matter of very little importance. At most it could only mean that Mr. Trevelyan would be com-



mitted for trial. It was inconceivable that, with such little evidence as could be brought against him—evidence which could scarcely even justify a faint presumption of his guilt on the part of persons wholly unacquainted with him—any verdict would be returned but one of acquittal.

Turning to the left and driving through Bloomsbury and Russell Square, and then along Woburn Place, we turned to the right, and soon, from an unfamiliar region, found ourselves in what to both of us was an unknown one. But the approach to a prison is not, like the approach to a palace, a matter of importance; and the gate of the House of Detention would not be an agreeable object, even if the building were situated at the end of an avenue or in the middle of a park.

I said that we wanted to see a prisoner named Rupert Trevelyan. The porter, in an unconcerned voice, asked, “what he was in for.” I felt some hesitation in giving a direct answer in the presence of Miss Montcalm, who, observing my perplexity, answered promptly:

“It’s that murder case.”

“Oh, yes,” said the man; “he is remanded. I remember. His solicitor and another gentleman were here half an hour ago. They have only just gone.”

The porter called to an attendant of some kind, and told him where to take us. We went along a passage, then turned to the left, and were taken upstairs, where, on the first floor, there was a long row of cells with gratings before them, suggesting in rather too forcible a manner the cages of wild beasts. I found that no conversation could



be held with the prisoner, except in the presence of one of the jailers.

“We have come to see you, Trevelyan,” I said, when the jailer had signified to him by some sharp taps on the rails that he was wanted.

“How good of you! and you, Ethel!” he added, seeing that Miss Montcalm was with me.

I now walked away. But the duration of such visits is limited, and after a very few minutes the jailer came toward me, and said that if I wanted to speak to the prisoner I must be quick. When I returned Trevelyan again thanked me for coming, and for bringing Miss Montcalm with me.

“We shall all do our best, you may be quite sure,” I said.

“Of that I am convinced, if only from what has been done already.”

“Can I do anything for you here?” I asked. “Have you all you want?—all that can be granted, I mean.”

“Huntly,” he said, “has arranged about my having my meals sent in, and all that sort of thing. I believe he has left some money with the porter.”

“Then, good-bye. We shall leave nothing untried to get you set free after the next hearing.”

“Many thanks. Good-bye.”

I turned away, not caring to witness Miss Montcalm's farewell. In a few seconds she followed me. The porter at the gate told me that he had already received money for the prisoner's meals from the other gentlemen. Wine he could not have, but beer was allowed. Could I, he added,



tell him whether the gentleman drank Guinness's stout or Bass's pale ale?

Instead of being shocked by the seeming triviality of the question, Miss Montcalm replied, like a sensible girl, that Mr. Trevelyan preferred pale ale.

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## CHAPTER VII.

AFTER taking Miss Montcalm back to her father's house in Porchester Terrace, where I left her, assuring her that I should call from day to day to tell her what fresh evidence had been collected, and what new phase the case might have assumed, I walked along the Bayswater Road toward the Marble Arch, asking myself what steps ought now to be taken. I had quite identified myself with the interests of Trevelyan. I knew that he was innocent, and if I had not been convinced of the fact myself, should have believed so from the conviction entertained by Florence and by both the Huntlys, who were as sure of their friend as they were of themselves. Besides, I was counsel in the case, though I had already told Mr. Wigram that I could not think of conducting it in chief, and that for leader he must secure the services of some one of greater experience and greater ability than myself.

The evidence against Rupert Trevelyan did not seem to me by any means conclusive; but, unfortunately, there was no evidence whatever against any one else. The real assassin, the man with the box in his hand who had turned the gas out and, pushing against the clerk, had rushed by him into the street, had made his escape; and it was im-



possible even to publish a description of him in the "Hue and Cry." Even if Trevelyan were acquitted, as for want of evidence he probably would be, there would still, unless the true criminal could be found, be a slur on his character which he would never be able to get rid of.

Meanwhile I had not heard Trevelyan's own account of his transaction with Reuben Malachi. But he had evidently told the whole story to his solicitor; and if I drove to Lincoln's Inn I should get there just in time to see Mr. Wigram before he left the office. I accordingly jumped into a hansom, and a quarter of an hour afterward was closeted with Mr. Wigram.

"His story," said the lawyer, "is very precise and quite intelligible; but unfortunately it can be made to tell against him. It proves too much."

"How so?" I asked.

"Listen, and you will see at once. Some weeks ago Mr. Trevelyan, anxious to raise the four thousand pounds which Mr. Montcalm wished as a minimum sum to be settled on his daughter before her marriage, called on Reuben Malachi, to whom he had been introduced by some Indian friend — probably one of Malachi's money-borrowing clients. He wanted Malachi to advance him money on a quantity of jewels which had been left him by his mother, and which for sentimental reasons—filial reasons, if you prefer it—he did not wish to part with. Mr. Trevelyan valued the jewels at from five to six thousand pounds, and wished to borrow four thousand pounds on them at six per cent. interest. Malachi offered to lend two thousand five hundred at ten per cent. interest or to buy the jewels for



three thousand. Again and again Mr. Trevelyan went to him. But Malachi would not lend the four thousand, and it seemed to Mr. Trevelyan that even if he did it would be impossible for him to pay four hundred pounds out of his salary simply for interest on money lent. At last, seeing no other way out of the difficulty, Mr. Trevelyan offered to sell the jewels out and out, and wanted four thousand five hundred for them. After much bargaining Malachi proposed to give five hundred pounds less than was now asked; and finally the jewels were sold for four thousand pounds. The money was paid, as we already know, in a check; and here comes the curious part. The clerk, Robert Marsden, declared in evidence that just before Mr. Trevelyan left Reuben Malachi's inner room he heard Malachi say to him: "You had better give me a receipt," or words to that effect. This is quite correct. Mr. Trevelyan, by his own account, was asked for a receipt, and gave one in some such form as this: Received for a case of jewelry, sixteen pieces, four thousand pounds." Now, the odd thing is that this receipt can nowhere be found, neither on the person of the deceased, nor in his desk, nor in any of his drawers."

"It is not at all more strange," I said, "than that the jewels can not be found."

"Any thief would have an interest in taking the jewels, but only one person would be interested in getting possession of the receipt."

"But why should Trevelyan mention the receipt if it was he who afterward stole it—of course, this is only a supposition for the sake of argument."



“We will say that he mentioned it to me because he wished me to know what really took place. But it would have been useless in any case to deny it, because the clerk has already said that he heard Malachi ask for a receipt.”

“It is certainly a great pity the receipt can not be found. I suppose a thorough search has been made?”

“Indeed it has; and if the police could have discovered the least scrap of paper bearing Mr. Trevelyan’s name it would have been produced in court. Then there is another curious thing. Malachi used to enter in his call-book the name of every one who came to the office. The inspector saw the book on the desk; and it will be shown in evidence that the last person who called at Malachi’s was Mr. Trevelyan.”

“Yes,” I said; “but if a man called on Reuben Malachi in order to rob him and put him to death he would probably not give his victim time to enter his name in a call-book.”

“Probably not. It is to be regretted all the same that the last name in the book should be that of Mr. Trevelyan. Besides this, Reuben Malachi kept an appointment-book, from which it appears that he expected Mr. Trevelyan at half past three, the time at which he in fact called. There is no record of any later appointment for that afternoon.”

“That,” I said, “proves really nothing.”

“It does not. But it would have been very satisfactory if there had been an entry in the book showing an appointment with some one else for a later hour. Altogether, we may say that the evidence against Mr. Trevelyan is not strong. But unfortunately there is no evidence at all in



connection with the other man; nothing but the word of the clerk, who is very well disposed toward Mr. Trevelyan, and had received many favors from him."

"Do you think the prosecution will try to show that Mr. Trevelyan and the unknown man were one and the same person?"

"Either that, or that the second man was not seen at all."

"It is quite clear, in any case, that Trevelyan left the office at a quarter to four, and at four was at the bank."

"The case for the prosecution will be that after cashing the check Mr. Trevelyan went back to Malachi's office. If, as young Marsden the clerk swears, the unknown man turned out the gas the moment he found himself observed, then Marsden could not have had a very good view of him; and if he entertained only a dim fancy that it might perhaps have been Trevelyan he would naturally give his friend the benefit of the doubt."

"And you imagine this will be Valentine's line of argument?"

"I think so. Mr. Trevelyan's imputed motive would be to get back the diamonds, and they have in fact disappeared. Who but Mr. Trevelyan was to know that Malachi had them?"

"There was no attempt on the part of Trevelyan to escape from London."

"It would have been fatal even to try. His only chance lay in pursuing his ordinary course of life as if nothing had happened. If the clerk had not suddenly returned to the office, when it might have been supposed that he had left



for the day, the man who killed Malachi, whoever he was, would not have been seen; and the murder would not have been discovered until ten o'clock the next morning, when the clerk, coming to the office at the usual hour, would have found his master dead. The supposition would then have been that some one had broken in and killed him during the night."

"The important thing," I replied, "in order not merely to get Trevelyan acquitted—for of that even now I have hopes—but to exculpate him in the eyes of the world, is to find the second man, the man who really did the deed. The clerk says he was fair; and the weapon he used was a drawing-room pistol bought at Devisme's, in Paris. It is no use trusting in such a matter as this to agents. I will go over to Paris myself. And, first of all, I had better see young Marsden. Where does he live?"

"It will also be desirable," said the solicitor, "to get from Mr. Trevelyan a list of the articles contained in the jewel box. That ought to be sent round without delay to all the pawnbrokers in London, though it is not very likely that the murderer would have tried to dispose of the jewelry the same night; and he would take very good care not to do so now."

I was prevented by private business of my own from going to Paris for the next two days. I had received a couple of briefs just at a time when I would much rather not have had them.

Meanwhile, after leaving Mr. Wigram's office I went straight to Florence's, where I found that Mr. Brownlow



had just been calling. He had, indeed, only just gone away. He had come to ask whether, under the circumstances, Miss Huntly thought Miss Montcalm would care to see him. Florence had replied that she thought it most improbable. But he had gone to leave cards at Porchester Terrace all the same, as if under the impression that this mark of sympathy would be becoming on his part.

“Supposing,” I said to Florence, “the very worst happened to Trevelyan, or, say, that he was acquitted for lack of evidence, but with the accusation of murder still resting upon him, do you think Mr. Brownlow would renew his offer?”

“Ethel,” replied Florence, “would care very little what accusation was made against Rupert if he were once set free. She would marry him at once, in spite of everything. Mr. Brownlow would, under no circumstances, have the least chance. Besides, he has given up all pretensions in that quarter, and I can’t understand why he should want to show himself at the Montcalms, at all, or to leave cards for them. I am sure they would rather not have them, especially Ethel.”

“I thought he was most anxious to marry her.”

“He was. But he was told the very day we met them at lunch that she would have no dowry. Mr. Brownlow thought that a lot of money left by the mother was settled on Ethel. As soon as he learned the contrary he cooled. But Ethel would never have married him under any circumstances. She is devotedly attached to Rupert.”

“So Brownlow is a fortune-hunter, is he?”



“Well, it looks like it. But he is said, all the same, to be very rich.”

“Says it himself,” I replied.

“You don’t believe he is?”

“I know nothing about him,” I replied. I could not help thinking, however, of the proof he had given of an impecuniosity which might or might not be, as Mr. Brunton supposed, only momentary.

The day afterward I started by the evening train for Paris, and the next morning called at M. Devisme’s on the Boulevard des Italiens to ask him whether he had lately sold to any Englishman a drawing-room pistol of very small caliber. The gunsmith replied that there was very little demand in England for such articles. It appeared, however, that during the last few months he had sold several *pistolets de salon* to foreigners, who, he believed, were either Englishmen or Germans. I showed him a photograph of Trevelyan, which was handed round the shop without being recognized as that of any recent customer. Trevelyan had passed through Paris on his way back from India only a month before, so that it was likely enough that, if he had had dealings with the firm his features would have been remembered.

“Of course,” said M. Devisme, “the pistol might have been bought second-hand.”

The only point this visit had settled was that no one resembling Rupert Trevelyan could be shown by the prosecution to have bought at the maker’s the pistol with which Malachi had been shot.

Just as I was leaving the shop I met coming into



it, dressed in plain clothes, Inspector Robins, who had given evidence at the examination. I shook hands with him.

“You are here on the same business as myself,” I said, “so I had better leave you.”

“Of course,” he replied, “I must find out all I can about this matter.”

I obtained from the commissionaire at the hotel where I had put up the address of several shops where second-hand pistols were sold. But here nothing seemed to be known about any of the customers, and I returned to London the same evening.

The next day I called on Mr. Wigram to tell him that the prosecution would be able to prove nothing against our client in regard to the purchase of the pistol, and, moreover, that I had been unable to obtain specific information as to any such weapon having been sold by the makers to an Englishman. I then called on Miss Montcalm, and as this was one of the days on which prisoners at the House of Detention could be seen by their friends, I took her there a second time. It was indeed her third visit, for she had been there once without me.

When I told Trevelyan about my journey to Paris, he expressed his satisfaction at the result of my inquiry. Appearances, he said, were already so much against him that it was satisfactory to hear of the absence of any further evidence, however slight. He was perfectly composed, and told Miss Montcalm, who also showed much self-command, that when his innocence had been fully established he should console himself by reflecting that the humiliation to



which he had been subjected had brought him such striking proofs of her affection.

“As if they were necessary!” she said.

The only witnesses we could produce at the second examination were the porter of the Union Club in Trafalgar Square, where Trevelyan had called at a quarter-past four on the day of the murder; the servant of a house in Arlington Street, Piccadilly, where he had left a card some ten minutes later; and the landlady of the house in Half Moon Street, where he lodged, who deposed that on coming home that afternoon he ordered tea, and that it was served to him, as usual when he was at home, precisely at five. The bank clerk called by the prosecution had already deposed to Trevelyan's having cashed the check just as the bank was closing, only a minute or two before four o'clock, so that, on the whole, the prisoner's itinerary from the Strand to Half Moon Street was clearly enough made out. If he had visited the Union Club at precisely a quarter-past four (and this point was well established, because Trevelyan had promised to look in at that time, and had called the porter's attention to the fact that the friend whom he had expected to meet had not arrived), he might easily have been back in Craven Street at half-past four—the hour at which the clerk surprised the unknown man who had evidently committed the murder. But if, as the servant of the house in Arlington Street declared, he called there at half-past four, he could not have been at Craven Street at the time when Malachi's clerk, Robert Marsden, arrived there.

Unfortunately the servant, on being cross-examined, could not be positively certain within ten minutes or a



quarter of an hour as to the time of Mr. Trevelyan's visit. He remembered his calling and leaving a card for Mr. Robertson, his master, and his impression was that it was about half past four o'clock. But it was perhaps a little earlier, perhaps a little later.

There was nothing to prove, then, that the prisoner had not taken a cab in Craven Street at half past four and driven straight to Arlington Street, which he would have reached in a few minutes. No cabman, however, was brought forward to prove that he had made any such drive; though it was to be assumed that the prosecution would have produced him could he have been found.

The evidence as to the prisoner's having been at home a little before five amounted to very little; and it was to be supposed that a man bent on proving an *alibi* would make a point of establishing his presence at certain places just as the prisoner had done. If, on the other hand, he had made these visits with such a view, it seemed odd that he should not have called the attention of the servant in Arlington Street to the precise time of his visit. The fact of his not having done so might be interpreted either in his favor, as showing carelessness on the subject, or against him, as showing that the exact time would not tell in his favor.

The evidence of the landlady at Half Moon Street was worth nothing; for, guilty or innocent, the prisoner might in either case have been at Half Moon Street at a little before five.

After hearing the additional testimony, the magistrate, not caring to incur the responsibility of setting free a prisoner against whom it was impossible, under the circum-



stances, not to entertain the gravest suspicions, committed him for trial. I again tendered bail, and my application was again refused.

One immediate effect of the committal was to cause a breach between Ethel Montcalm and her father. Mr. Montcalm was not pleased with his daughter's solicitude for a man who, besides being accused of murder, had, by his own admission, resorted to desperate expedients for raising money.

His daughter ought, he maintained, to give him up, at least until his innocence had been proclaimed by a jury of his fellow-countrymen. Ethel, however, was more devoted to him than ever, and if he had been liberated on bail she would certainly have done her best to marry him forthwith, without waiting for the trial. The fact of being his wife would then have given her the right to take in him the interest which she was now reproached with, seeing that she had hitherto been only engaged to him on certain conditions not yet fulfilled. The day after the committal such a dispute took place between Ethel and her father that she left the house and sought hospitality from Florence, who most willingly gave it to her.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

THE case having now assumed a terribly serious aspect, I called on Mr. Wigram to ask him whom he proposed to retain as leader. Mr. Wigram replied that Larkins was evidently the man; and it was arranged in the course of the day that Mr. Larkins, Q.C., should lead the case, with



myself and a friend of Mr. Larkins's, who was in the habit of working with him—Mr. Turnbull—as juniors. I half mistrusted myself as counsel, and Mr. Wigram, I think, mistrusted me altogether, on account of the interest I took in the case. I knew, however, that I could be useful in getting up such evidence as it might yet be possible to obtain.

To those who knew Trevelyan's circumstances, as Florence and her brothers knew them, there was absolutely no motive for his committing a robbery; while his character rendered it wholly impossible that he should have been guilty of either of the crimes charged against him. I could not think without horror of the terrible fate which threatened him in case the true murderer should not be discovered; and my excited state, though it might help me in the pursuit of inquiries likely to throw some light on the mystery, was not, I myself felt, at all favorable to the calmness necessary under all conditions on the part of an advocate.

There seemed to be no possibility of identifying the man whom Marsden had seen for a moment under the gaslight; and it was equally difficult to find a clew to the missing jewels unless, indeed, the assassin had committed the folly of parting with them, or with a portion of them, immediately after the murder.

Mr. Willing had put up bills on every hoarding in London, promising a reward of a thousand pounds for such information as might lead to the discovery of any one of the stolen articles, with another thousand for information leading to the apprehension of the thief. A copy of this bill was sent to every pawnbroker in London, and it was pub-



lished daily as an advertisement in the morning and evening papers.

I, of course, went to see Mr. Brunton on the subject, but he could give me no hope of tracing the jewels. It was just possible that some professional burglar had made his way into Reuben Malachi's house with a false key, and seeing Malachi with the jewels before him, had approached him stealthily, shot him in the back of the neck, and rushed out immediately afterward with the jewel box in his hand. But in that case the man would not have pawned any of the jewels in their setting. He would have removed the stones and dealt with them separately, reserving the gold for melting. Mr. Brunton did not, however, think that a professional criminal would have been so nervous over the business as to leave the pistol behind him, or to drop it in the excitement of a sudden flight.

Between the hour of the murder and the publication of the news in the last editions of the evening papers diamond rings and diamond brooches had no doubt been pawned at a dozen pawnbrokers; and it was of rings, brooches, necklaces, and a tiara that the missing jewels consisted.

"Why, there was a diamond ring pawned here," Mr. Brunton suddenly exclaimed, "just about the time when you were watching the business in your wig and spectacles."

"Yes, and I knew the man that pawned it, though I didn't think it fair to tell you who he was."

"Well, I dare say there were forty or fifty transactions of the same kind going on at other pawnbrokers' at the same time."



“Would it be of any use communicating with the receivers of stolen goods?”

“The police are doing that.”

“But they don’t always do their work well.”

“They do it more systematically than we could.”

“Though not, of course, with so much zeal. There would have been no danger whatever,” I added, “in pawning the jewels one by one if it had been done immediately after the murder; that is to say, between half past four or five and half-past seven, when the late editions of the evening papers were published.”

“We close at seven.”

“Well, between a quarter to five and seven. None of the articles *could* have been pawned earlier than half-past four in the afternoon, and none *would* have been pawned after that evening. Therefore, so far as the pawnbrokers are concerned, our inquiry is limited to what they took in between the hours of half-past four and seven. It would be quite worth while to visit every pawnshop in London and collect particulars about all diamond ornaments pledged during that brief period. There is a thousand pounds to be earned; though I know that considering the deep interest taken in the case by all the Huntly family you need no such incentive.”

“I will certainly do my best, and, being in the trade, it will be easier work for me than for you or Captain Huntly. I will go myself this very day to all the pawnbrokers within reach. I will take one half, and Johnson, my foreman, who is as well known as I am, will take the other. But there is no reckoning with the artfulness of thieves. If



any of the jewels were pawned at all it might have been either at the very corner of the street where the crime was committed, or at five miles' distance. But the probability is that, if pledged at all, the things would be taken to one of the large shops in the best part of London where plenty of business is done in jewelry, and no particular notice would be attracted."

In the evening Mr. Brunton called upon me, saying that he and his foreman had been to every pawnbroker's from Temple Bar to Hyde Park Corner, and from the Strand to Oxford Street, and that he had brought with him six diamond rings and four diamond brooches—the only articles he had met with which could possibly belong to the missing collection. Together with the articles themselves, Mr. Brunton had procured from his brothers in trade copies of the tickets issued in connection with them. This seemed to me entirely superfluous, for it was not likely that a man who had obtained possession of jewelry by means of murder and robbery would afterwards pawn it under his real name. But everything that a man does is somehow characteristic of him; and even in studiously false indications true ones may sometimes be read.

I wrote to Mr. Wigram, telling him that I would call upon him in the morning, and I was at his office before ten with the various articles of jewelry. Mr. Wigram hastened with them to Newgate, whither Trevelyan since his committal for trial had been removed. As the prisoner's solicitor Mr. Wigram could be admitted at any time; and Trevelyan, who since his committal had become much depressed, seemed visited by a gleam of hope when he heard



on what business the solicitor had come. Of the brooches he could make nothing, nor could he recognize any of the rings, though he selected three about which he begged Mr. Wigram to make further inquiries. One of these rings had been pledged by that perpetual visitor to the pawnshop, Mr. John Smith. The address, "100 Fleet Street," gave as little hope of identification as the name.

The second ring had been pawned by a self-styled "Cecil Plantagenet, 1 Grosvenor Square"—a description quite as unpromising as the previous one. The third was the one I myself had seen pawned in the false, but not transparently false, name of Huntingdon.

"I think I could get at the owner of this one," I said, when Mr. Wigram on his return to the office told me what had been done. "As regards the two others the only thing will be to advertise and trust to the owners having the decency to make themselves known. Cecil Plantagenet, being evidently a humorist, is probably a kind-hearted man; but I have no hopes of John Smith."

"A humorist," replied Mr. Wigram, "is one who finds pleasure in the ludicrous imperfections of his fellow-men. He is happiest when they are most ridiculous. Let us trust, however, that 'Cecil Plantagenet' will justify the good opinion you have formed of him."

I scarcely knew how to approach Mr. Brownlow, or rather how Mr. Brunton was to approach him; for it was not necessary to cause him the mortification of letting him know that he had been seen by me in the act of pawning his ring. Nor did there seem to be any use in going to Mr. Brownlow at all; for, apart from other reasons, he had, as



I calculated, performed his act of hypothecation at Mr. Brunton's before the murder had been committed. Mr. Wigram, however, suggested that if we were to act at all we had better do so systematically. So, after telling the solicitor in confidence who the self-styled Mr. Huntingdon really was, I went to Mr. Brunton, enlightened him in like manner, and then asked him to call at Long's Hotel and inquire of Mr. Brownlow whether the ring which he had pawned on October 20th, 1868, had belonged to him for any length of time, or whether he had acquired it quite recently, and if so under what circumstances. He was of course to do all this as delicately as possible.

The advertisements to John Smith of Fleet Street, and Cecil Plantagenet of Grosvenor Square, were drawn up and sent to the papers; and I took Mr. Brunton with me in a cab toward Bond Street, intending to drop him, and then go on to Florence's.

Leaving Mr. Brunton to make his inquiries at the hotel I drove to Norfolk Street. But as I was getting out of the hansom I saw him close behind in another hansom, which had apparently been following me. He said he had something important to tell me, and that he driven after me as rapidly as possible for that purpose. Having sent the cabs away I walked with Mr. Brunton down Park Lane toward Piccadilly; and what he told me was indeed remarkable. He had not found Mr. Brownlow at the hotel; but recognizing the porter as an old friend, and wishing to turn his visit to some account, he had asked whether Mr. Brownlow had chambers in Lincoln's Inn, where he had given his address when effecting his petty mortgage, and if



so, whether he was staying there on October 20th. The porter referred to the books and said that the only address Mr. Brownlow had given was Beauchamp Manor, Huntingdonshire, and that as regarded October 20th he was not that day in England. He went away in the morning, said the porter, to Paris, and did not come back until two days afterward.

“He was not in Paris,” I said to Mr. Brunton, “on October 20th, though he might have started for France at night by the mail train. At half past four on the afternoon of that day he was at your shop in Coventry Street. I saw him and made a mental note of it at the time; though not wishing to split upon him—and also perhaps because I did not care to say how I came to know it—I never mentioned the matter to a soul.”

“He told them at the hotel that he had to catch the train from Charing Cross at seven in the morning, and he drove straight to the station with a portmanteau and a carpet bag. If, then, he remained in London that day, he wished, for some reason, to conceal the fact.”

“Are you going back to the hotel?”

“Yes, at a little after seven. He has ordered dinner at half past.”

I was anxious to hear the result of Mr. Brunton's new inquiry, and told him that I would call upon him early the next morning, probably about nine o'clock. It really mattered very little what Mr. Brownlow had told the hotel people about his movements. It might suddenly have occurred to him on the way to the station that he had forgotten some business which had to be attended to in London



that very day; and, having transacted it, he might not have thought it necessary to go back to the hotel to take his rooms on for another day when he had already paid his bill.

I dined that evening at Florence's, and did my best to persuade her and above all her friend Ethel Montcalm that the new evidence we were trying to collect might have an important effect on the issue of the trial.

At eight o'clock the next morning the postman's rap at the outer door of my chambers announced the arrival of a letter.

It proved to be from Mr. Brunton. He reminded me that I was to call upon him at nine in the morning, and told me that he had something important to communicate. At nine o'clock I was in Coventry Street; and Mr. Brunton told me forthwith that Mr. Brownlow was a very queer customer, not by any means straight in his dealings, and, moreover, offensively rude. Mr. Brunton had waited for him at the entrance to the hotel, and on his arrival, about ten minutes past seven, had said to him point-blank, in presence of the porter: "I believe I had the honor of transacting business with you on the 20th of last month"—it was now the beginning of November. Mr. Brownlow started at the mention of the date, though he replied in a haughty manner that he thought not, since on October 20th he happened to be in Paris.

"Think again, sir," Mr. Brunton had said to him.

Mr. Brownlow replied that his memory could not deceive him, and turning to the porter, asked what day it was he went to Paris.



“The 20th, sir, at seven in the morning,” was the porter’s answer.

“There you see,” said Mr. Brownlow. “But what was it you wanted to speak to me about?”

“You are Mr. Brownlow, are you not, of the firm of Brownlow, Short & Wood, the shipping agents in Gracechurch Street?”

Mr. Brunton had said this simply to throw Mr. Brownlow off the scent.

“Never heard of them till now. I am Mr. Brownlow of Beauchamp Manor, in Huntingdonshire; and I am connected with no one in the city but Brownlow the East India merchant in Leadenhall Street, who happens to be my uncle.”

“I told him,” said Mr. Brunton, “that I must have made a mistake; though,” he added to me, “I had made no mistake about one thing. I had found out that he had some reason for pretending to be in Paris on a day when both you and I know very well that he was in London.”

“But you found out nothing about the ring?”

“I took care not to mention it. But I have discovered something about it that ought to prove, one way or the other, whether it really forms part of the missing jewels.”

“What is that?”

“I examined it very carefully this morning with a microscope, and saw by a crack, imperceptible to the naked eye, that it opened. You see how thick the setting is?” Mr. Brunton at the same time displayed the ring.

“Yes, I noticed that at the time it was left.”

“Well, look here.”



Mr. Brunton touched a spring on the inner side of the ring, when a little lid of gold flew open, disclosing beneath it, in the most solid part of the setting, a hollow place, at the bottom of which was inscribed in microscopic letters, formed with minute diamonds, the Greek letters AEI.

“What does that mean?” said Mr. Brunton.

“It apparently means that the ring has a history attached to it. The Greek word formed by these letters signifies ‘always,’ or ‘forever.’ Do you know what next we shall find out?” I added. “That this fellow Brownlow has bolted.”

“I think not,” said Mr. Brunton. “He had not bolted at half-past eight this morning; and a quarter of an hour afterward I had a detective upon him.”

“But the detective could not arrest him without a warrant.”

“He would somehow stop him. He would arrest him and take the consequences. The first policemen he met with would be ready to assist him.”

“One detective will not be enough.”

“We will get as many more as may be necessary. I have explained to the first that if it leads to anything he will get his full share of the reward.”

“The worst that could happen,” I said, “would be an action for false imprisonment, which is only an affair of damages. I will go to Mr. Wigram’s,” I continued, “and ask him to take the ring to Mr. Trevelyan. I am afraid, however, that if he had been able to recognize it he would have looked for the spring himself. Meanwhile it will be rather awkward for Brownlow.”



“Not unless he goes to a railway station. Even then the detectives would follow him without being perceived. They know all the guards. If they found him attempting to leave the country they would, of course, arrest him; and in that case they would probably not be doing so without cause. But I said nothing to alarm him. Before he has had time to finish his breakfast—for these gentlemen do not breakfast very early—we shall know something about the ring.”

Unfortunately Trevelyan was unable to identify it. He did not know that either his father or his mother had ever possessed a ring with the word “AEI” inscribed upon or within it in a secret chamber. The ring resembled, as he had before observed, one that had been in his mother’s possession; and a very curious thing, which rendered it probable that it might have belonged either to his father or his mother, was that the letters composing the word, A.E.I., were the initial letters of her Christian names—Adelaide Ethel Isabella. But how could Brownlow be arrested and charged with robbery and murder—for one accusation involved the other—because he had in his possession a ring marked with an inscription which was complete in itself, and which might be adopted by any one?

As I had promised in the most absolute manner to tell Miss Montcalm everything, however slight, that might tend to throw light on the true history of the crime, I went to Norfolk Street in the course of the morning to tell her of the discovery made in connection with Mr. Brownlow’s mortgaged ring. Before doing so I called once more at Mr. Brunton’s to tell him that though Mr. Trevelyan had



not been able to identify the ring, he had given to the motto within it an interpretation which seemed to mark it as having been the property of his mother. Or it might, I thought, have been given by his father to his mother as a token of constancy.

When I told Miss Montcalm of our discovery she jumped forthwith, as might have been expected, at the conclusion that Brownlow was the robber and murderer of Reuben Malachi; the would-be murderer, therefore, of her beloved Rupert. She wanted me to have him arrested at once, and thrown into prison on a charge which, for the present, there was no evidence to support; and I evidently fell greatly in her opinion when I told her that this could not be done. I explained to her, however, that Mr. Wigram was being kept fully informed of every, even the slightest, fact that could be brought against Brownlow, that Brownlow was being carefully watched, and that at the earliest possible moment the solicitor would be prepared to strike.

Meanwhile Mr. Wigram had had another interview with Trevelyan, from whom he wished to obtain as much information as possible with reference to Brownlow's antecedents and his relations, if any, with Reuben Malachi. It appeared that Trevelyan had once been intimate with Brownlow, who, indeed, had first introduced him to Miss Montcalm—with the familiar result of being cut out by his friend; and on one occasion, when Brownlow held a bill for two thousand pounds accepted by his uncle, a rich merchant, he had enabled him to get it discounted by Reuben Malachi. Brownlow claimed to have a full share in the business of Brownlow & Co., the East India merchants;



and the acceptance for two thousand pounds represented, as Mr. Trevelyan believed, his half-year's portion of the profits.

Mr. Wigram thought it strange that with such an excellent signature as that of Brownlow & Co. Mr. Brownlow should not have got the bill discounted in the ordinary way at his bank. But Mr. Brownlow had himself accounted for his not doing so on the ground that his account was too low to justify him in applying for such accommodation as would have been willingly granted to him had he been in the habit of keeping a fair balance. The incident of the bill, and of Mr. Brownlow's being obliged to get it discounted at a usurer's, proved that he was occasionally short of money; but only as every man is sure to be who outruns his income, whatever its amount.

Mr. Wigram resolved meanwhile to see the manager of the establishment where Mr. Malachi had banked; and he called there before going back to his office. The manager knew nothing of any bill accepted by Brownlow & Co., and certainly no such bill had been discounted by them or placed in their hands for presentation on the part of Mr. Malachi. The bill, then, must still be among Reuben Malachi's papers; unless, indeed, Brownlow & Co. had on maturity taken it up.

It was now necessary to make a visit to Messrs. Brownlow & Co., in Leadenhall Street. The head of the firm, Mr. Josiah Brownlow, received Mr. Wigram in rather an off-hand manner; and when the solicitor mentioned that he had come about an acceptance of theirs, he asked him sarcastically whether it was overdue, or, if not, how it could concern him as a solicitor.



“It is about a bill,” said Mr. Wigram, “drawn upon you by your nephew, Mr. Mark Brownlow.”

“If he draws any bills upon me I shall not accept them, that is all. I told him so a year ago. I suppose he is trying to borrow money from you. If so you will have to lend it to him on his own security—certainly not on mine. That is all I have to say to you; and now good-morning.” Mr. Wigram had learned far more than he expected; for if the head of the firm had refused a year before to allow his nephew to draw upon him, the acceptance for the bill which Mark Brownlow had recently got discounted at Reuben Malachi’s was clearly a forgery.

The bill would, in the ordinary course of things, be among Reuben Malachi’s papers, and the next point was to get an order for their examination. The order was promptly obtained; and the result of a careful search, made under the inspection of an officer of the court, was that the document sought for could not be found.

But although Mr. Wigram had not been able to discover any signs of Mark Brownlow’s draft upon Brownlow & Co., he had noticed traces of another kind. In the blood which had formed a pool round Malachi’s chair he had observed footprints so distinct that the boots worn on the occasion by the murderer ought certainly to fit them.

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## CHAPTER IX.

WHEN I told Miss Montcalm that Mr. Brownlow had been well acquainted with Reuben Malachi she welcomed the fact as a new reason for regarding him as the mur-



derer. When I added that Reuben Malachi had discounted a bill for him she became still more certain that it was he who had done the deed; and when she heard that the bill bore the acceptance of Brownlow & Co., and that Mark Brownlow had represented himself as possessing a share in the business, she wished to call for a policeman, and send him at once to take the felon in charge.

It seemed to me that there was now almost enough evidence against him to justify such a step. But when the next morning I saw Mr. Wigram, and urged him to take out a warrant for Mark Brownlow's apprehension, he declared that there was no hurry since Brownlow was so carefully watched that he could not possibly get away. Besides, although we had excellent reasons for suspecting him, what proofs had we against him? He pretended to have been in Paris when he was really in London. He had pawned a ring which might be, and probably was, one of the jewels that had been stolen from Reuben Malachi; but it could not be identified. He had got discounted by Reuben Malachi (so at least Mr. Trevelyan believed) a bill for a large amount purporting to be accepted by Brownlow & Co. But this, also, could not be proved; it being impossible to find any trace of the document. We had found out enough about Mr. Mark Brownlow to stamp him as a liar and an impostor. But we could not prove that he was a robber and a murderer.

"I am now," he continued, "about to act on a suggestion made by Mr. Trevelyan himself; a suggestion which had also, I think, occurred to you."

"Do you mean about Marsden, the clerk?"



“I do. If he could identify Brownlow as the man he surprised in Malachi’s office our case would be complete. Mr. Brownlow would sleep to-night in the House of Detention, and a few weeks hence in the condemned cell at Newgate. I did not believe he was the man until I saw his Uncle Brownlow this morning. But it is quite clear now that the acceptance which Reuben Malachi discounted for him was a forgery. Probably Malachi himself suspected it, and charged for it in proportion, thinking that at the last moment a man of resources like Mark Brownlow would be sure somehow or other to take it up. Under certain conditions a usurer like Reuben Malachi would rather discount a forged acceptance at eighty per cent. than a genuine one at 1 per cent. above the bank rate; which is all that in fair business ought to be charged. If the bill had become due, and Brownlow was unable to meet it—which the incident of the pawned ring seems to indicate—there would be a clear motive for the murder. The robbery of the jewels may in that case have been an afterthought, suggested by their presence on Malachi’s table. However, it is no use speculating about that.”

“In my opinion there is already enough against him to justify us in applying for a warrant,” I said.

Mr. Wigram repeated, however, what he had said before; that Brownlow was already as good as captured. The necessity, meanwhile, of bringing Marsden face to face with him, or rather of enabling Marsden to see him from a position in which he himself would not be observed, was recognized by both of us. Marsden lived at 121 High Street, Camden Town. It was arranged that I should go and see



him at once, while Mr. Wigram was to ascertain whether Mr. Brownlow would dine at home that evening, so that Marsden might be enabled to have a look at him as he sat at table. The porter and several of the servants at the hotel were now in our pay, and they were remunerated at a rate which rendered it improbable that any of them would care to betray us. Even if they did there were enough detectives on the lookout to make it impossible for Brownlow to get away; and at the least sign of an attempt to escape he would be arrested.

When I reached 121 High Street, Camden Town, I found, to my consternation, that Marsden was dangerously ill and could be seen by no one. He had been attacked first by a violent inflammation of the eyes, then by a fever; and now his brain was affected and, worst perhaps of all, he was unable to see. By the usual means employed in such cases I succeeded, notwithstanding the doctor's prohibition, in gaining admittance to Marsden's room. His eyes were in a terrible condition, and he was slightly delirious.

This was a sad blow. The one decisive piece of evidence on which we were counting, not merely for Brownlow's apprehension, but for his conviction, was denied us. I went round to the doctor who had been attending Marsden—he lived close by in Amphyll Square. But he could give me no hopes of his patient's speedy recovery. There was only too great a chance, he said, of his never recovering at all; while if he did get well there was no saying whether he would ever again be able to see.

It would be useless now to arrest Brownlow. It would



be better, no doubt, for Trevelyan's chances of acquittal that suspicion should be divided between him and another man; but what we wanted was not merely his acquittal for want of direct proof, but the clearest demonstration of guilt against the actual murderer.

I told Mr. Wigram of Marsden's condition. My news, however, was so unsatisfactory that I hesitated to call at Florence's. I feared to tell Miss Montcalm of the condition in which I had found the one man by whom Brownlow could be identified if, as we all now firmly believed, it was he who had assassinated Reuben Malachi.

Miss Montcalm was not so much distressed as I thought she would have been. She expressed a hope that Marsden would soon be better. Meanwhile she had received information about a step taken by the prosecution which she could not explain. The landlady of the house in Half Moon Street where Trevelyan had been lodging—who, like all his friends, could not for one moment entertain the least suspicion of his guilt—had been to see her, and had told her that the police had paid a fresh visit to the house and had taken away all Mr. Trevelyan's boots.

I saw at once what this signified. The prosecution, equally with the solicitor for the defense, had noticed the footprints in the congealed blood, and wished to see whether any of Mr. Trevelyan's boots would correspond with them. Neither Miss Montcalm, nor Florence, nor myself, were at all alarmed; though when I came to think of it I dreaded lest by some accident Trevelyan might among his collection of boots have one pair which more or less closely would fit the impression.



“But the boots worn by that wretch Brownlow,” cried Miss Montcalm, “will fit the impression, beyond doubt. Why did none of you think of this?”

“For the simple reason,” I replied, “that until Mr. Wigram visited Malachi’s office, in order to search for papers, we did not know of these footprints. Wigram,” I continued, “does not attach much importance to the marks, thinking they must have been made the day after the murder by the men who carried the body away for the inquest. But I believe he is wrong. The blood by that time would have dried up and would not have yielded an impression.”

“I know more about this matter than you do,” said Miss Montcalm. “I have seen that villain Brownlow often enough, and he has enormous splay feet, whereas Rupert has small, delicate ones. Rupert’s shooting boots are smaller than Brownlow’s patent leathers. I can take you to the very shop in St. James’s Street where Brownlow deals.”

“At the hotel we shall have no trouble in getting the boots he actually wears.”

“Do so, then, without a moment’s delay. But do you think the prosecution, when they find that Rupert’s boots do not correspond with the marks, will give him the benefit of the discovery? Not they! They will take his life if they can. They will not spoil their case by letting out the least thing that would tell in favor of his innocence.”

I endeavored to explain to the excited girl that it was impossible for me to go straight to Long’s Hotel and offer the porter, whom I did not know, a five-pound note for



such of Brownlow's boots as he might be able to secure. I told her, however, that I would drive straight to Mr. Wigram's, and that he assuredly would before long have the boots in his possession.

When I told Mr. Wigram of the capture of boots made at Trevelyan's lodgings, and proposed a counter-raid against the boots of Mr. Brownlow, he welcomed the idea as an excellent one. He could not of course remember whether the impressions he had noticed in the congealed blood were large or small; but he was as much convinced as I was of Trevelyan's innocence, and almost as much as I was of Brownlow's guilt. He felt sure, then, that Trevelyan's boots would not correspond with the footprints; while if Mr. Brownlow's did, he declared that he should at once take out a warrant. Unfortunately we could not take action in the matter without some delay. It would be necessary to obtain a new order for entering the premises in Craven Street, and this could not be done until the following day.

The boots which Mr. Brownlow left out that night to be cleaned were not brought back to him the following morning; and as soon as he went down to breakfast a second pair of walking boots were taken from his dressing-room and delivered to one of the detectives outside the hotel, by whom they were brought to Mr. Wigram's office. Then Mr. Wigram, myself, a detective, and the officer appointed by the court, went to the house in Craven Street and at once applied the critical test.

I saw at a glance that the footprints were enormous. And Mr. Brownlow's boots, which were indeed of colossal



proportions, fitted them exactly. We tried first one pair, then the other. But as they had been made on the same last the result in each case was the same. The work had occupied scarcely a minute; and five minutes later Mr. Wigram was at Bow Street, where the magistrate granted, without delay, the desired warrant.

When the police reached Long's Hotel, Mr. Brownlow, after breakfasting and smoking a cigar, had gone upstairs to put the finishing touch to his toilet before exhibiting himself in the street; and he was complaining loudly that his boots were taken down-stairs to be cleaned and never brought back. Two pairs, he said, were missing; and he wanted to know the meaning of it. Before the servant, whom he was questioning, had had time to invent an excuse, the police were upon him. A four-wheeled cab was at the door, and he was driven straight to Bow Street.

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## CHAPTER X.

THE case against Brownlow was even now by no means complete. But at the worst the evidence was such that, even if he were acquitted, Trevelyan could scarcely be found guilty; and a condemnation of both of them as accomplices in the same deed, considering that the two men were at enmity, and that not the slightest proof of complicity existed, was out of the question.

We knew that Brownlow had had dealings with Reuben Malachi, but could only prove it by the evidence of the man who stood already accused of the assassination. Brownlow had had in his possession immediately after the



murder a ring which seemed to have belonged to the collection of which Malachi had been robbed. But to this even the prisoner himself could not swear, and no one else knew anything on the subject. On the other hand, Mr. Brunton and myself could either of us prove that Brownlow, when he pretended to have been in Paris, was really in London. We could also show that he was in want of money at the time, and that he had pawned the ring to which suspicions were attached. Finally, his boots fitted exactly the footprints in the congealed blood, and this was a matter not of opinion or belief, but of fact.

All, in short, that could be established against Brownlow was that his boots corresponded with the marks left on the blood-coated floor, and that he had pawned a ring in London within a quarter of an hour of the murder, at a time when, by his own account, he was in Paris. These facts would doubtless be enough to deter all who became acquainted with them from consenting to share a double-bedded room with Mr. Brownlow—especially if they happened, to his knowledge, to have with them a large sum of money, and, above all, if he happened to have about him a drawing-room pistol. But they did not legally prove that he had assassinated Reuben Malachi. To obtain a verdict on this point the identification of Brownlow by Marsden, the clerk, as the man whom he had surprised in Malachi's office, was necessary; and this, in Marsden's blind and helpless condition, was for the present impossible.

There was only too much reason for believing that this would be impossible also in the future. I had made inquiries only the day before as to Marsden's state, and found



that it had scarcely improved. He was less feverish, and the delirium had quite ceased. But his eyes were terribly inflamed, and he had completely lost his sight.

Brownlow had now been examined before the magistrate, and had been remanded for the production of further evidence. Bail had been tendered, but, as in the case of Trevelyan, had been refused. He was to be brought up again in three days, and meanwhile I was very assiduous in my inquiries after poor Marsden's health. On the second day, though his eyes were still in a hopeless state, there was a marked improvement in his general health, and I was allowed to see him. I had been told not to talk to him on any subject that would be likely to excite him. I therefore begged the doctor to be present while I conversed with him, so that if there were any signs of undue agitation on his part I might be called upon to desist. He asked me, however, for news of Trevelyan before I had had time to lead up to the subject, and I told him at once that there were hopes now of his being fully exculpated.

“How?” he asked.

I told him that another man had been arrested, who had had dealings with Reuben Malachi, and dealings of rather a questionable character; and I asked whether he remembered having seen at the office a Mr. Brownlow. He had no recollection, however, of any such name, nor had he ever entered, or seen it entered, in Malachi's call-book.

This was not at the first glance very satisfactory. But when I reflected on the matter it only seemed to show that Brownlow had made a point of keeping his dealings with Malachi strictly secret. His uncle had threatened him



with disinheritance or with the stoppage of such allowance as he still made him in case of his having fresh dealings with money-lenders. This, too, apart from the apparent fact that the bill which Malachi had discounted for him bore a forged acceptance.

“However,” I said, “whether you knew Mr. Brownlow or not, you saw the actual murderer, and, if you saw him only for a few seconds, you have a faculty of rapid and exact observation—as Mr. Trevelyan and myself both know from your lifelike portrait—and you could perhaps describe him.”

“I could show you what the man was like.”

“You could? How so?”

“Quite easily. The day after Mr. Trevelyan’s committal, when I was in the next room, grieving over his dreadful position, I tried to recall the murderer’s features. I had been out in the rain, I had come home wet through, and was already getting feverish. But I remember now that I finished my sketch. I think, indeed, I made two. If no one has taken them away they must be there still. Please see.”

A moment afterward I had in my hands two portraits of Mr. Brownlow, both of them lifelike.

“My poor boy,” I cried, returning to the invalid’s bedside, “you have saved the life of your friend. This is the murderer!”

“Don’t be too excited about it,” said the doctor to his patient. “Keep calm, and this news will do you good.”

“I don’t know what the rules of evidence may say to



it," I observed, as I hurried on my overcoat, "but the proof of identity, as it stands, is to me complete."

Taking with me the portraits, of which one was almost a repetition of the other, I jumped into a hansom, and drove as fast as the horse could carry me to Lincoln's Inn. Mr. Wigram was not in. He had gone to Newgate to see his client, and hastening after him I caught him just as he was coming out of the prison gates.

"Here is all we wanted," I said. "Here, and here again, is an exact likeness of the murderer. Whom does it resemble?"

"It is the living image of Brownlow," he replied; and taking with him the portraits, he returned with them to the cell in order to show them to Trevelyan.

From Newgate I drove direct to Florence's, and told Miss Montcalm at once what was indeed the fact—that the innocence of Trevelyan and the guilt of Brownlow were both established beyond doubt. Needless to say that she was overjoyed beyond description; so much so, indeed, that a reaction quickly took place. Her nerves had been in an overstrained condition ever since Trevelyan's arrest. The tension was now at an end, and, giving way for the first time to her emotion, she sobbed hysterically.

"She has much to thank you for," said Florence. "If the case had been got up in the ordinary way we should have known nothing about these portraits."

"Not quite so soon, perhaps," I replied.

"Probably not at all. If the poor young man had died without your visiting him and questioning him, the people about him would have thought nothing of these sketches."



“ Probably all sorts of objections will be made to them by Brownlow’s counsel, and to give them their full weight it will be necessary for Marsden to swear that he made them from memory, and from direct recollection of the man whom he surprised under the gaslight with the box in his hand.”

The necessary declaration, duly attested by witnesses, was obtained the following day. But there was no opportunity, nor was there any immediate necessity, for producing this new evidence. At the second examination, held the same morning, Brownlow had been committed for trial.

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## CHAPTER XI.

THE trial of Rupert Trevelyan for the murder of Reuben Malachi excited great interest; and, in spite of the high character of the accused, and of the absence of any direct evidence against him, there was a general impression among the public that he would be found guilty. He had had secret dealings with a very shady character, and by his own account had sold him jewels to the value of £4,000 without giving any receipt for the money: at least, no receipt had been found. The evidence as to time, place, and, above all, motive, pointed alike to Rupert Trevelyan; while against Brownlow, the second man accused, there was absolutely nothing but the testimony as to his boots; and the Brownlow party, as against the Trevelyan party, had no doubt but that at the proper moment boots would be produced from a dozen ready-made shops exactly similar



in shape and size to those which corresponded with the footmarks in the blood.

Trevelyan's character for integrity and honor was, as the Brownlow party admitted, unimpeachable; but what, they asked, in a case of murder and against established facts, was character worth? Of the new proofs that were brought forward at Trevelyan's trial—of the portraits, that is to say, in which the features of Brownlow were so clearly depicted—nothing was known to the general public until the trial came on.

The likenesses were to be used for a double purpose; and the first object they would serve was that of proving that the portrait of the true murderer, drawn and sworn to by the youth who had almost surprised him in the act, bore no resemblance whatever to Rupert Trevelyan.

The day before the trial the two Huntlys—the soldier and the clergyman—dined at Norfolk Street with Florence, Miss Montcalm, and myself. The party was not precisely a joyful one; but no one was gloomy. We were all glad to think that the next day Trevelyan would beyond doubt be acquitted. We even hoped that after hearing the evidence for the defense the judge would stop the case, or, appealing at once to the jury, would direct a verdict for the accused without giving them the trouble of leaving the court.

The evidence for the prosecution need not be gone over again. There was nothing to add to what had already been deposed before the magistrate. I elicited in cross-examination from the policeman, who gave evidence as to the position in which the body had been found, that he and



other members of the force had been employed to compare a number of boots taken from Trevelyan's lodgings with the footprints left in the congealed blood around Reuben Malachi's chair, and that the boots and the footprints did not at all correspond. This was a strong point in favor of Trevelyan, and it probably impressed the jury all the more as coming from a witness for the prosecution. An attempt had been made to convict him by his boots, and it had failed. For the defense the only evidence we proposed to put forward was (1) evidence as to character, which we in no way relied upon in connection with the case, but which was to be brought forward in order to rehabilitate Trevelyan in the eyes of the general public; and (2) evidence that the murder had been committed by Brownlow.

The production of Brownlow's boots and the depositions of the police as to their exact correspondence with the footprints in the blood, made a visible impression on all in court; and when this was followed by the exhibition of the portraits the sensation caused was manifested in a general whispering, which sounded like a suppressed roar. The ushers called out "silence," and after a moment's excitement order was restored.

Then the sworn evidence of Robert Marsden, taken by commission, was read. Marsden declared that he had been accustomed to make portraits from memory, and that the only portraits or drawings of any kind in his sitting-room at the time of his falling ill had been made by him from recollection of the man whom he had surprised beneath the gas-light in Malachi's office, with a box in his hand, the moment after the murder. That the portraits in no way



resembled Trevelyan was apparent to every one. Our next point was to show that they bore an unmistakable likeness to Mark Brownlow. To prove this Brownlow was brought into court between two policemen. Again the court was filled with a hoarse murmur; for the portraits were as like the original as the best photographer could have made them.

The evidence for the defense was now complete. Sergeant Valentine made an eloquent speech for the prosecution, in which, while putting aside the evidence of the boots as unimportant (though it was the prosecution which had first thought of profiting by such testimony), he protested against the reception of Robert Marsden's evidence. He expressed doubts as to the power of any artist, however skillful, to reproduce from memory the features of a man whom he had seen under the glare of a gas-light for only a few seconds, and laid stress on the fact that Robert Marsden was a friend of the prisoner, to whom he was indebted for many kindnesses. How, he asked, could Robert Marsden, blind as he was, be sure that the pencil drawings described as portraits of Mark Brownlow were really those which he had made immediately before falling ill—at a time when he was already in a morbid state of excitement, and scarcely knew what he was doing? It was quite possible that, without being conscious of it, he had seen Mr. Brownlow's face under quite different circumstances, and, with his morbidly retentive memory, had recalled its lines and features in spite of himself.

Nevertheless, Marsden's evidence had been properly attested, and he swore very positively that he had never seen



the man whose portrait he had made in double until the afternoon of the murder, when he suddenly found himself face to face with him; and though this evidence would perhaps not be enough to convict Mr. Brownlow, it was sufficient to procure the acquittal of Rupert Trevelyan.

The jury, addressed very briefly by the judge, pronounced a verdict of acquittal, and did so, as I had hoped and almost foreseen, without leaving the box.

Trevelyan came out of Newgate as calmly as he had gone into the House of Detention; and he, the two Huntlys, and myself drove straight to Florence's, where I had already taken care that Miss Montcalm should receive a special message, sent off the moment the verdict was pronounced. We had had the greatest difficulty in preventing her from coming to the court; and to satisfy as much as possible her feverish anxiety I had sent her telegram after telegram as the case went on.

I did not witness Ethel Montcalm's meeting with Trevelyan. He had gone ahead in one hansom with Tom Huntly, while I followed with the clergyman in another. We all, however, dined and spent the evening together, and before taking my leave I reminded Florence of what in the tumult of events might, I delicately hinted, have perhaps escaped her memory. She begged me, however, not to speak of it until the case of Reuben Malachi was quite at an end, and asked me how I could think she had forgotten when I had been giving her new proofs of affection at every moment.

Tom Huntly went back to Aldershot that night by the ordinary late train. William Huntly stayed at Norfolk



Street. I, on my way back to the Temple, accompanied Trevelyan to his lodgings in Half Moon Street, where his landlady wept with joy at seeing him again. She had heard of the acquittal almost as soon as it was pronounced, through the evening papers, and though she had all along felt sure that his innocence must in the end be recognized, she had been so alarmed by the misfortunes which had already happened to him that she could not, she said, but feel the most painful anxiety as to the result.

I went upstairs, and smoked a cigar with Trevelyan; and in the course of conversation he told me several things about Brownlow which had long before convinced him that the man was capable of any sort of villainy. He had gambled away large sums of money, and had resorted to all kinds of disgraceful expedients, including, as it now seemed, forgery, in order to raise fresh sums, which, as soon as obtained, were squandered in dissipation or lost at play. Trevelyan had hated him, he said, in a perfectly natural way, for presuming to set his affections upon Ethel: and, knowing how much he detested him, had refrained for that reason from saying anything against him. It was only during the last few weeks, since his return on leave from India, that he had found him out; and he could not, he said, but regard himself as in some measure responsible for Malachi's death, since it was he who, before he knew Brownlow in his true character, had introduced him to the Jew.

What had really taken place, he believed, was this. Brownlow, being without funds to meet the bill on Brownlow and Co.—the bill of which the senior partner in that



firm knew nothing, and to which, therefore, the acceptance must have been forged—had gone to Malachi, or more probably, had met him somewhere in order to persuade him to renew. Supposing Malachi to have refused, Brownlow must have gone to his office at a time when he expected him to be alone; and finding that he really was alone, had first made him produce the bill as if with a view to payment, and then shot him and seized the document. As for the robbery of the jewels, Trevelyan felt sure that it had been committed on the impulse of the moment, just because they happened to be within reach.

Since Trevelyan's acquittal we had none of us occupied ourselves much with the case against Brownlow. Trevelyan and myself had spoken about him late at night. But at Florence's his name had not been mentioned; and the innocence of Rupert Trevelyan having been clearly proved and publicly proclaimed, there was probably not one of us—certainly not Trevelyan, and not, I believe, even Ethel Montcalm herself—who cared much about seeing Brownlow brought to justice. This, however, only meant that we had no particular wish to have him hanged; for it would have been very unsatisfactory, as diminishing the significance of Trevelyan's acquittal, if Brownlow also had been set free.

This, however, was rendered quite out of the question by the recovery of Robert Marsden, who, on the day of Brownlow's trial, was brought into court, and swore not only that the two portraits which he had executed—and which he now in a direct manner recognized as his work—had been drawn from recollection of the man he had met



in the office; but moreover that that man was no other than the prisoner in the dock. This positive evidence, following upon so much evidence, more or less important, of an indirect kind, was conclusive; and Brownlow was found guilty and sentenced to death. His uncle had spared no expense in securing the best counsel; for though he had renounced his dissolute nephew, he did not (if only for the sake of the family) wish him to be hanged.

When, however, all hope had vanished, it was not to his uncle that Mark Brownlow was indebted for the last act of mercy to be shown to him in this world.

Whenever a man gets into a serious difficulty the first question to be asked about the matter is, according to the well-known story of the Italian judge: "Who was the woman?"

The same question may also be asked when from a serious difficulty a man has somehow made his escape.

The woman in Brownlow's case was one to whom he had not behaved well; but who, for unknown reasons, and possibly from gratitude for some act of kindness or lavish generosity on his part, had formed a deep affection for him. By representing herself as his sister she procured admittance to his cell after the sentence of death had been pronounced, and while seeming to wipe away tears which would have been natural under the circumstances, but which she did not shed, dropped a handkerchief at his feet and, instead of picking it up, took from him one which he held in his hand.

On leaving the cell the criminal's only friend gave him a significant look of which the special meaning was not at



first apparent to him. Then, seeing that she was not understood, she pressed the corner of her handkerchief—his handkerchief that is to say—to her mouth and began to suck it. Brownlow, when she had quitted him forever, did the same with the handkerchief left in his hands (it was one, he fancied, that he had himself given to her during the first days of their acquaintance), and found that it had an intensely bitter taste, which seemed to have an astringent effect on his lips and tongue. He tried another corner, then the center, and found that the cambric was everywhere as bitter as could be.

Was it the bitterness of death? If this were strychnine he was saved. He had taken tonics which his doctor had told him contained strychnine in very minute quantities; and he fancied that he recognized the taste. There was some water left in his drinking-glass. With the greatest possible care he steeped the handkerchief in it and then squeezed the moistened cambric like a sponge into his mouth.

When, a few minutes later, the jailer came to the cell to bring him food he found him stretched on his back quite dead; his limbs bent backward and perfectly rigid. The man's first impression was that he had died in a fit. Then seeing the handkerchief in his mouth he fancied he must have suffocated himself. But a very slight examination of the handkerchief by the prison doctor showed what had really taken place.

A few days after the announcement of Mark Brownlow's death, a letter was received by Mr. Josiah Brownlow, his uncle, from a firm of bankers in Paris, informing him



that they held a case of jewels, the property of his nephew, the late Mr. Mark Brownlow, on which they had advanced the sum of £3000, and begging to know whether he proposed to redeem them.

Mr. Josiah Brownlow forwarded the letter without comment to the solicitors who had defended Rupert Trevelyan; and Trevelyan had now to decide what he should do.

Miss Montcalm, when Rupert mentioned the matter to her, said that there could be only one thing to do; to redeem the jewels with a portion of the £4000 that Trevelyan, with such painful consequences, had realized for her benefit. This was accordingly done; but not until Trevelyan had come to an arrangement with Malachi's heirs, which cost him another thousand or more. Then Trevelyan and Ethel got married, so that, apart from other reasons, they might go to Paris together: and Mr. Montcalm, who in a long letter of regret had expressed his wish to attend the ceremony in his proper character of father, signalized his presence by a gift of £10,000.

Among the contents of the jewel case was a ring, which corresponded by its general design with the one which had been deposited by the wretched Brownlow in the hands of Mr. Brunton.

It opened in the same manner, and exhibited in similar characters the inscription "AEL." This, it was to be supposed, was a ring given by Trevelyan's mother to his father, as the corresponding one had apparently been given by his father to his mother.

She had given him a ring marked with her initials. He had given her a ring marked with the Greek word signify-



ing eternity, which to him, as to her, these initials spelled. In violation, I believe, of the law, Mr. Brunton restored to Trevelyan the ring which had been stolen and pawned by Brownlow. No one, however, was injured by the transfer, and if the form of appearing before a magistrate had been gone through an order for its delivery would doubtless in due course have been granted.

As for the business, it was made over on easy terms to Mr. Brunton himself. He was entitled to the reward of £1000 for having discovered one of the missing jewels; and though he declined to accept it, Florence, her two brothers, and myself were all very anxious to do him a good turn. He had saved up £5000, and I accepted this in Florence's name as half of the purchase-money. But we all wanted to close our connection with the concern as soon as possible, and he managed to borrow £3000 on his own account, and had, I believed, a thousand lent him by each of the two brothers.

At all events, Florence, when, a week after the return of the Trevelyans from Paris, she became my wife, had the satisfaction of reflecting that in marrying her I was not connecting myself with the pawnbroking interest; though, as I had told her before, I should have been only too delighted to become her husband even if she had been the daughter of an old clothesman or of a dealer in marine stores.

I begged her, moreover, to remember that my very brief connection with Mr. Brunton's financial business had enabled me to free from a terrible accusation one of her best friends; for if on October 20th, 1868, I had not seen



Mark Brownlow pawn the stolen ring, and Robert Marsden offer as a pledge one of his life-like portraits, it would have been difficult to prove Trevelyan's innocence, and impossible to establish the guilt of the true murderer.

THE END.



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Romance..... 10  
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772 Gascoyne, the Sandal-Wood  
Trader..... 20

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878 Little Tu'penny..... 10

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137 Uncle Jack..... 10  
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146 Love Finds the Way, and Other  
Stories. By Besant and Rice 10  
230 Dorothy Forster..... 20  
324 In Luck at Last..... 10  
541 Uncle Jack..... 10  
651 "Self or Bearer"..... 10  
882 Children of Gibeon..... 20

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- 273 Love and Mirage; or, The Wait-  
ing on an Island..... 10  
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Stories..... 10  
594 Doctor Jacob..... 20

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21 Sunrise: A Story of These  
Times..... 20  
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44 Macleod of Dare..... 20  
49 That Beautiful Wretch..... 20  
50 The Strange Adventures of a  
Phaeton..... 20  
70 White Wings: A Yachting Ro-  
mance..... 10  
78 Madcap Violet..... 20  
81 A Daughter of Heth..... 20  
124 Three Feathers..... 20  
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Affairs and Other Adventures 20  
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Thomas Upmore, Bart., M. P. 20  
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204 Vixen..... 20  
211 The Octoroon..... 10  
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263 An Ishmaelite..... 20  
315 The Mistletoe Bough. Edited  
by Miss Braddon..... 20  
434 Wyllard's Weird..... 20  
478 Diavola; or, Nobody's Daugh-  
ter. Part I..... 20  
478 Diavola; or, Nobody's Daugh-  
ter. Part II..... 20  
480 Married in Haste. Edited by  
Miss M. E. Braddon..... 20  
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M. E. Braddon..... 20  
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M. E. Braddon..... 20  
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Darnel..... 10  
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Shadow in the Corner..... 10  
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er's Secret, and George Caul-  
field's Journey..... 10  
552 Hostages to Fortune..... 20  
553 Birds of Prey..... 20  
554 Charlotte's Inheritance. (Se-  
quel to "Birds of Prey").... 20  
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559 Taken at the Flood..... 20  
560 Asphodel..... 20  
561 Just as I am; or, A Living Lie 20  
567 Dead Men's Shoes..... 20  
570 John Marchmont's Legacy.... 20  
618 The Mistletoe Bough. Christ-  
mas, 1885. Edited by Miss M.  
E. Braddon..... 20  
840 One Thing Needful; or, The Pen-  
alty of Fate..... 20  
881 Mohawks..... 20

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(CONTINUED).

250	Sunshine and Roses; or, Diana's Discipline.....	10
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 361 The Red Rover..... 20  
 373 Wing and Wing..... 20  
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     Chase..... 20  
 379 Home as Found. (Sequel to  
     "Homeward Bound")..... 20  
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     Knoll..... 20  
 385 The Headsman; or, The Ab-  
     baye des Vignerons..... 20  
 394 The Bravo..... 20  
 397 Lionel Lincoln; or, The Leag-  
     uer of Boston..... 20  
 400 The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish... 20  
 413 Afloat and Ashore..... 20  
 414 Miles Wallingford. (Sequel to  
     "Afloat and Ashore")..... 20  
 415 The Ways of the Hour..... 20  
 416 Jack Tier; or, The Florida Reef 20  
 419 The Chainbearer; or, The Little-  
     page Manuscripts..... 20  
 420 Satanstoe; or, The Littlepage  
     Manuscripts..... 20  
 421 The Redskins; or, Indian and  
     Injin. Being the conclusion  
     of the Littlepage Manuscripts 20  
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     Sealers..... 20  
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     Voyage to Cathay..... 20  
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     Hunter..... 20  
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 22 David Copperfield. Vol. II.... 20  
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 24 Pickwick Papers. Vol. II..... 20  
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 37 Nicholas Nickleby. Second half 20  
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 84 Hard Times..... 10  
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 91 Barnaby Rudge. 2d half..... 20  
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 94 Little Dorrit. Second half..... 20  
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 106 Bleak House. Second half.... 20  
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 107 Dombey and Son. 2d half..... 20  
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     Doctor Marigold..... 10  
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 131 Our Mutual Friend. (2d half).. 20  
 132 Master Humphrey's Clock..... 10  
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     and Collins..... 10  
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     Chuzzlewit. First half..... 20  
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     day People..... 20  
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 104 The Coral Pin. 2d half... 20  
 204 Pédouche, a French Detective. 10



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(CONTINUED).

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	First half.....	
328	Babiole, the Pretty Milliner.	20
	Second half.....	
453	The Lottery Ticket.....	20
475	The Prima Donna's Husband..	20
522	Zig-Zag, the Clown; or, The	
	Steel Gauntlets.....	20
523	The Consequences of a Duel. A	
	Parisian Romance.....	20
648	The Angel of the Bells.....	20
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697	The Pretty Jailer. 2d half....	20
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	half.....	20
699	The Sculptor's Daughter. 2d	
	half.....	20
782	The Closed Door. 1st half....	20
782	The Closed Door. 2d half....	20
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851	The Cry of Blood. 2d half....	20

**"The Duchess's" Works.**

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	Eric Dering.....	10
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	Stories.....	10
136	"That Last Rehearsal," and	
	Other Stories.....	10
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171	Fortune's Wheel, and Other	
	Stories.....	10
284	Doris.....	10
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	Week in Killarney.....	10
342	The Baby, and One New Year's	
	Eve.....	10
390	Mildred Trevanion.....	10
404	In Durance Vile, and Other	
	Stories.....	10
486	Dick's Sweetheart.....	20
494	A Maiden All Forlorn, and Bar-	
	bara.....	10
517	A Passive Crime, and Other	
	Stories.....	10
541	"As It Fell Upon a Day.".....	10
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771	A Mental Struggle.....	20
785	The Haunted Chamber.....	10
862	Ugly Barrington.....	10
875	Lady Valworth's Diamonds....	20

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55	The Three Guardsmen.....	20
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	Sequel to "The Count of	
	Monte-Cristo".....	10
262	The Count of Monte-Cristo.	
	Part I.....	20
262	The Count of Monte-Cristo.	
	Part II.....	20
717	Beau Tancrede; or, The Mar-	
	riage Verdict.....	20

**Maria Edgeworth's Works.**

708	Ormond.....	20
788	The Absentee. An Irish Story.	20

**Mrs. Annie Edwards's Works.**

644	A Girton Girl.....	20
834	A Ballroom Repentance.....	20
835	Vivian the Beauty.....	20
836	A Point of Honor.....	20
837	A Vagabond Heroine.....	10
838	Ought We to Visit Her?.....	20
839	Leah: A Woman of Fashion....	20
841	Jet: Her Face or Her Fortune?	10
842	A Blue-Stocking.....	10
843	Archie Lovell.....	20
844	Susan Fielding.....	20
845	Philip Earncliffe; or, The Mor-	
	als of May Fair.....	20
846	Steven Lawrence. First half.	20
846	Steven Lawrence. Second half	20
850	A Playwright's Daughter.....	10

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34	Daniel Deronda. 2d half.....	20
36	Adam Bede.....	20
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693	Felix Holt, the Radical.....	20
707	Silas Marner: The Weaver of	
	Raveloe.....	10
728	Janet's Repentance.....	10
762	Impressions of Theophrastus	
	Such.....	10

**B. L. Farjeon's Works.**

179	Little Make-Believe.....	10
573	Love's Harvest.....	20
607	Self-Doomed.....	10
616	The Sacred Nugget.....	20
657	Christinas Angel.....	10

**G. Manville Fenn's Works.**

193	The Rosery Folk.....	10
558	Poverty Corner.....	20
587	The Parson o' Dumford.....	20
609	The Dark House.....	10

**Octave Feuillet's Works.**

66	The Romance of a Poor Young	
	Man.....	10
386	Led Astray; or, "La Petite	
	Comtesse".....	10

**Mrs. Forrester's Works.**

80	June.....	20
230	Omnia Vanitas. A Tale of So-	
	ciety.....	10



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(CONTINUED).

484	Although He Was a Lord, and Other Tales.....	10
715	I Have Lived and Loved.....	20
721	Dolores.....	20
724	My Lord and My Lady.....	20
726	My Hero.....	20
727	Fair Women.....	20
729	Mignon.....	20
732	From Olympus to Hades.....	20
734	Viva.....	20
736	Roy and Viola.....	20
740	Rhona.....	20
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883	Once Again.....	20

**Jessie Fothergill's Works.**

214	Peril.....	20
572	Healey.....	20

**R. E. Francillon's Works.**

135	A Great Heiress: A Fortune in Seven Checks.....	10
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360	Ropes of Sand.....	20
656	The Golden Flood. By R. E. Francillon and Wm. Senior..	10

**Emile Gaboriau's Works.**

7	File No. 113.....	20
12	Other People's Money.....	20
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26	Monsieur Lecoq. Vol I.....	20
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144	Promises of Marriage.....	10

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64	A Maiden Fair.....	10
317	By Mead and Stream.....	20

**James Grant's Works.**

566	The Royal Highlanders; or, The Black Watch in Egypt...	20
781	The Secret Dispatch.....	10

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222	The Sun-Maid.....	20
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432	The Witch's Head.....	20
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791	The Mayor of Casterbridge....	20

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143	One False, Both Fair.....	20
358	Within the Clasp.....	20

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65	Back to the Old Home.....	10
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281	The Squire's Legacy.....	20
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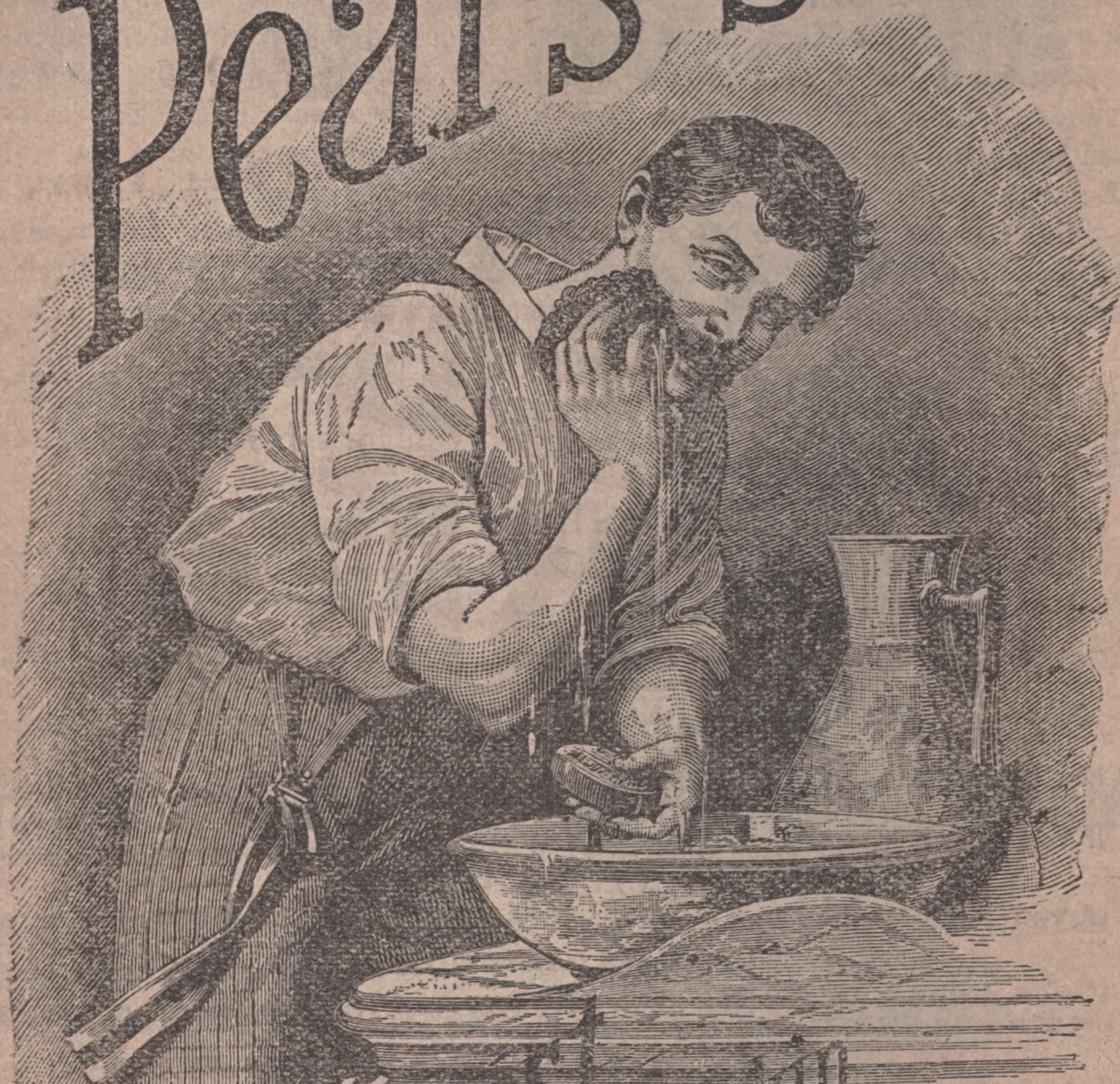
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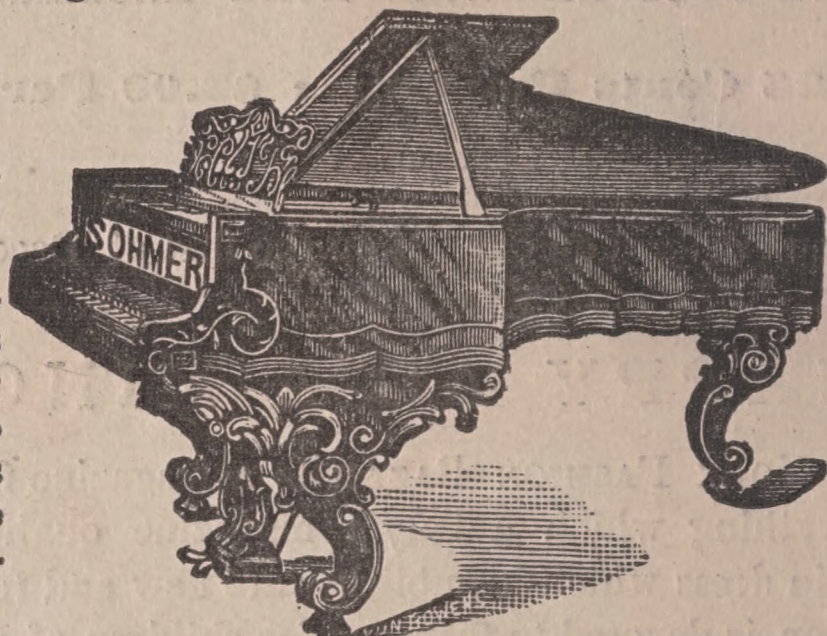
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